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THE LITTLE BAS.

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1868.

The Brambleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER LII.

ISCHIA.



THE sun had just sunk below the horizon, and a blaze of blended crimson and gold spread over the Bay of Naples, colouring the rocky island of Ischia till it glowed like a carbuncle. Gradually, however, the rich warm tints began to fade away from the base of the mountains, and a cold blue colour stole slowly up their sides, peak after peak surrendering their gorgeous panoply, till at length the whole island assumed a hue blue as the sea it stood in.

But for the memory of the former glory it would have been difficult to imagine a more beautiful picture. Every cliff and jutting promontory tufted with wild olives and myrtle was reflected in the waveless sea

below; and feathery palm-trees and broad-leaved figs trembled in the water, as that gentle wash eddied softly round the rocks, or played on the golden shore.

It was exactly the hour of peace and repose. Along the shores of the bay, in every little village, the angelus was ringing, and kneeling worshippers bowed in prayer; and even here, on this rocky island, where

crime and wretchedness were sent to expiate by years of misery their sins against their fellow-men, the poor galley-slaves caught one instant of kindred with the world, and were suffered to taste in peace the beauty of the hour. There they were in little knots and groups—some lying listlessly in the deep grass; some gathered on a little rocky point, watching the fish as they darted to and fro in the limpid water, and doubtless envying their glorious freedom; and others, again, seated under some spreading tree, and seeming, at least, to feel the calm influence of the hour.

The soldiers who formed their guard had piled their arms, leaving here and there merely a sentinel, and had gone down amongst the rocks to search for limpets, or those rugged ricci di mare which humble palates accept as delicacies. A few, too, dashed in for a swim, and their joyous voices and merry laughter were heard amid the splash of the water they disported in.

In a small cleft of a rock overshadowed by an old ilex-tree, two men sat moodily gazing on the sea. In dress they were indeed alike, for both wore that terrible green and yellow livery that marks a life-long condemnation, and each carried the heavy chain of the same terrible sentence. They were linked together at the ankle, and thus, for convenience sake, they sat shoulder to shoulder. One was a thin, spare, but still wiry-looking man, evidently far advanced in life, but with a vigour in his look and a quick intelligence in his eye that showed what energy he must have possessed in youth. He had spent years at the galleys, but neither time nor the degradation of his associations had completely eradicated the traces of something above the common in his appearance; for No. 97—he had no other name as a prisoner—had been condemned for his share in a plot against the life of the king; three of his associates having been beheaded for their greater criminality. What station he might originally have belonged to was no longer easy to determine; but there were yet some signs that indicated that he had been at least in the middle rank of life. His companion was unlike him in every way. He was a young man, with fresh complexion and large blue eyes, the very type of frankness and good-nature. Not even prison diet and discipline had yet hollowed his cheek, though it was easy to see that unaccustomed labour and distasteful food were beginning to tell upon his strength, and the bitter smile with which he was gazing on his lank figure and wasted hands showed the wearing misery that was consuming him.

"Well, old Nick," said the young man, at length, "this is to be our last evening together; and if I ever should touch land again, is there any way I could help you—is there anything I could do for you?"

"So then you're determined to try it?" said the other, in a low growling tone.

"That I am. I have not spent weeks filing through that confounded chain for nothing; one wrench now, and it's smashed."

"And then?" asked the old man, with a grin.

"And then I'll have a swim for it. I know all that—I know it all,"

said he, answering a gesture of the other's hand ; "but do you think I care to drag out such a life as this ?"

"I do," was the quiet reply.

"Then why you do is clear and clean beyond me. To me it is worse than fifty deaths."

"Look here, lad," said the old man, with a degree of animation he had not shown before. "There are four hundred and eighty of us here ; some for ten, some for twenty years, some for life ; except yourself alone, there is not one has the faintest chance of a pardon. You are English, and your nation takes trouble about its people, and, right or wrong, in the end gets them favourable treatment, and yet you are the only man here who would put his life in jeopardy on so poor a chance."

"I'll try it, for all that."

"Did you ever hear of a man that escaped by swimming ?"

"If they didn't it was their own fault—at least they gave themselves no fair chance ; they always made for the shore, and generally the nearest shore, and of course they were followed and taken. I'll strike out for the open sea, and once that I have cut the cork floats off a fishing-net, I'll be able to float for hours when I tire swimming. Once in the open, it will be hard luck if some coasting vessel, some steamer to Palermo or Messina, should not pick me up. Besides, there are numbers of fishing-boats——"

"Any one of which would be right glad to make five ducats by bringing you safe back to the police."

"I don't believe it—I don't believe there is that much baseness in a human heart."

"Take my word for it, there are depths a good deal below even that," said the old man, with a harsh grating laugh.

"No matter, come what will of it, I'll make the venture ; and now, as our time is growing short, tell me if there is anything I can do for you, if I live to get free again. Have you any friends who could help you ? or is there anyone to whom you would wish me to go on your behalf ?"

"None—none," said he, slowly but calmly.

"As yours was a political crime——"

"I have done all of them, and if my life were to be drawn out for eighty years longer it would not suffice for all the sentences against me."

"Still I'd not despair of doing something——"

"Look here, lad," said the other, sharply ; "it is my will that all who belong to me should believe me dead. I was shipwrecked twelve years ago, and reported to have gone down with all the crew. My son——"

"Have you a son, then ?"

"My son inherits rights that, stained as I am by crime and condemnation, I never could have maintained. Whether he shall make them good or not will depend on whether he has more or less of my blood in his veins. It may be, however, he will want money to prosecute his claim. I have none to send him, but I could tell him where he is almost certain

to find not only money but what will serve him more than money, if you could make him out. I have written some of the names he is known by on this paper, and he can be traced through Bolton the banker at Naples. Tell him to seek out all the places old Giacomo Lami worked at. He never painted his daughter Enrichetta in a fresco, that he didn't hide gold, or jewels, or papers of value somewhere near. Tell him, above all, to find out where Giacomo's last work was executed. You can say that you got this commission from me years ago in Monte Video; and when you tell him it was Niccolo Baldassare gave it, he'll believe you. There. I have written Giacomo Lami on that paper, so that you need not trust to your memory. But why do I waste time with these things? You'll never set foot on shore, lad—never."

"I am just as certain that I shall. If that son of yours was only as certain of winning his estate, I'd call him a lucky fellow. But see, they are almost dressed. They'll be soon ready to march us home. Rest your foot next this rock till I smash the link, and when you see them coming roll this heavy stone down into the sea. I'll make for the south side of the island, and, once night falls, take to the water. Good-by, old fellow. I'll not forget you—never, never," and he wrung the old man's hand in a strong grasp. The chain gave way at the second blow, and he was gone.

Just as the last flickering light was fading from the sky, three cannon-shot in quick succession announced that a prisoner had made his escape, and patrols issued forth in every direction to scour the island, while boats were manned to search the caves and crevasses along the shore.

The morning's telegram to the Minister of Police ran thus:—"No. 11 made his escape last evening, filing his ankle-iron. The prisoner 97, to whom he was linked, declares that he saw him leap into the sea and sink. This statement is not believed; but up to this, no trace of the missing man has been discovered."

In the afternoon of the same day, Temple Bramleigh learned the news, and hastened home to the hotel to inform his chief. Lord Culduff was not in the best of tempers. Some independent member below the gangway had given notice of a question he intended to ask the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the leader of a Radical morning paper had thus paraphrased the inquiry:—"What Mr. Bechell wishes to ascertain, in fact, amounts to this,—'Could not the case of Samuel Rogers have been treated by our resident envoy at Naples, or was it necessary that the dignity and honour of England should be maintained by an essenced old fop, whose social successes—and we never heard that he had any other—date from the early days of the Regency?'"

Lord Culduff was pacing his room angrily when Temple entered, and, although nothing would have induced him to show the insolent paragraph of the paper, he burst out into a violent abuse of those meddling Radicals, whose whole mission in life was to assail men of family and station.

"In the famous revolution of France, sir," cried he, "they did their

work with the guillotine; but our cowardly canaille never rise above defamation. You must write to the papers about this, Temple. You must expose this system of social assassination, or the day will come, if it has not already come, when gentlemen of birth and blood will refuse to serve the Crown."

"I came back to tell you that our man has made his escape," said Temple, half-trembling at daring to interrupt this flow of indignation.

"And whom do you call our man, sir?"

"I mean Rogers—the fellow we have been writing about."

"How and when has this happened?"

Temple proceeded to repeat what he had learned at the prefecture of the police, and read out the words of the telegram.

"Let us see," said Lord Culduff, seating himself in a well-cushioned chair. "Let us see what new turn this will give the affair. He may be recaptured, or he may be, most probably is, drowned. We then come in for compensation. They must indemnify. There are few claims so thoroughly chronic in their character as those for an indemnity. You first discuss the right, and you then higgie over the arithmetic. I don't want to go back to town this season. See to it, then, Temple, that we reserve this question ontirely to ourselves. Let Blagden refer everything to us."

"They have sent the news home already."

"Oh! they have. Very sharp practice. Not peculiar for any extreme delicacy either. But I cannot dine with Blagden, for all that. This escape gives a curious turn to the whole affair. Let us look into it a little. I take it the fellow must have gone down—eh?"

"Most probably."

"Or he might have been picked up by some passing steamer or by a fishing-boat. Suppose him to have got free, he'll get back to England, and make capital out of the adventure. These fellows understand all that nowadays."

Temple, seeing a reply was expected, assented.

"So that we must not be precipitate, Temple," said Lord Culduff, slowly. "It's a case for caution."

These words, and the keen look that accompanied them, were perfect puzzles to Temple, and he did not dare to speak.

"The thing must be done this wise," said Lord Culduff. "It must be a 'private and confidential' to the office, and a 'sly and ambiguous' to the public prints. I'll charge myself with the former; the latter shall be your care, Temple. You are intimate with Flosser, the correspondent of the *Bell-Wether*. Have him to dinner, and be indiscreet. This old Madeira here will explain any amount of expansiveness. Get him to talk of this escape, and let out the secret that it was we who managed it all. Mind, however, that you swear him not to reveal anything. It would be your ruin, you must say, if the affair got wind: but the fact was, Lord Culduff saw the Neapolitans were determined not to surrender him, and, knowing

what an insult it would be to the public feeling of England that an Englishman was held as a prisoner at the galleys for an act of heroism and gallantry, the only course was to liberate him at any cost and in any way. Flosser will swear secrecy, but hint at this solution as the only one in certain keen coteries. Such a mode of treating the matter carries more real weight than a sworn affidavit. Men like the problem that they fancy they have unravelled by their own acuteness. And then it muzzles discussion in the House, since even the most blatant Radical sees that it cannot be debated openly; for all Englishmen, as a rule, love compensation, and we can only claim indemnification here on the assumption that we were no parties to the escape. Do you follow me, Temple?"

"I believe I do. I see the drift of it at least."

"There's no drift, sir. It is a full, palpable, well-delivered blow. We saved Rogers; but we refuse to explain how."

"And if he turn up one of these days, and refuse to confirm us?"

"Then we denounce him as an impostor; but always, mark you, in the same shadowy way that we allude to our share in his evasion. It must be a sketch in water-colours throughout, Temple; very faint and very transparent. When I have rough-drafted my despatch, you shall see it. Once the original melody is before you, you will see there is nothing to do but invent the variations."

"My lady wishes to know, my lord, if your lordship will step upstairs to speak to her?" said a servant at this juncture.

"Go up, Temple, and see what it is," whispered Lord Culduff. "If it be about that box at the St. Carlos, you can say our stay here is now most uncertain. If it be a budget question, she must wait till quarter-day." He smiled maliciously as he spoke, and waved his hand to dismiss him. Within a minute,—it seemed scarcely half that time,—Lady Culduff entered the room, with an open letter in her hand; her colour was high, and her eyes flashing, as she said:—

"Make your mind at ease, my lord. It is no question of an opera-box, or a milliner's bill, but it is a matter of much importance that I desire to speak about. Will you do me the favour to read that, and say what answer I shall return to it?"

Lord Culduff took the letter and read it over leisurely, and then laying it down, said, "Lady Augusta is not a very perspicuous letter-writer, or else she feels her present task too much for her tact; but what she means here is, that you should give M. Pracontal permission to ransack your brother's house for documents, which, if discovered, might deprive him of his title to his estate. The request, at least, has modesty to recommend it."

"The absurdity is, to my thinking, greater than even the impertinence," cried Lady Culduff. "She says that on separating two pages, which by some accident had adhered, of Giacomo Lami's journal,—who ever Giacomo Lami may be,—~~we~~—~~we~~ being Pracontal and herself—have discovered that it was Giacomo's habit to conceal important papers in the

walls where he painted, and in all cases where he introduced his daughter's portrait; and that, as in the octagon room at Castello there is a picture of her as Flora, it is believed—confidently believed—such documents will be found there as will throw great light on the present claim—”

“First of all,” said he, interrupting, “is there such a portrait?”

“There is a Flora; I never heard it was a portrait. Who could tell after what the artist copied it?”

“Lady Augusta assumes to believe this story.”

“Lady Augusta is only too glad to believe what everybody else would pronounce incredible; but this is not all, she has the inconceivable impertinence to prefer this request to us, to make us a party to our own detriment,—as if it were matter of perfect indifference who possessed these estates, and who owned Castello.”

“I declare I have heard sentiments from your brother Augustus that would fully warrant this impression. I have a letter of his in my desk wherein he distinctly says, that once satisfied in his own mind,—not to the conviction of his lawyer, mark you, nor to the conviction of men well versed in evidence, and accustomed to sift testimony, but simply to his own not very capacious intellect,—that the estate belongs to Pracontal, he'll yield him up the possession without dispute or delay.”

“He's a fool; there is no other name for him,” said she, passionately.

“Yes; and his folly is very mischievous folly, for he is abrogating rights he has no pretension to deal with. It is just as well, at all events, that this demand was addressed to us and not to your brother, for I'm certain he'd not have refused his permission.”

“I know it,” said she, fiercely; “and if Lady Augusta only knew his address and how a letter might reach him, she would never have written to us. Time pressed, however; see what she says here. ‘The case will come on for trial in November, and if the papers have the value and significance Count Pracontal's lawyers suspect, there will yet be time to make some arrangement,—the Count would be disposed for a generous one,—which might lessen the blow, and diminish the evil consequences of a verdict certain to be adverse to the present possessor.’”

“She disavows her interests from those of her late husband's family with great magnanimity, I must say.”

“The horrid woman is going to marry Pracontal.”

“They say so, but I doubt it, at least, till he comes out a victor.”

“How she could have dared to write this, how she could have had the shamelessness to ask *me*,—*me* whom she certainly ought to know,—to aid and abet a plot directed against the estates—the very legitimacy of my family,—is more than I can conceive.”

“She's an implicit believer, one must admit, for she says, ‘If on examining the part of the wall behind the pedestal of the figure nothing shall be found, she desires no further search. The spot is indicated with such exactness in the journal, that she limits her request distinctly to this.’”

"Probably she thought the destruction of a costly fresco might well have been demurred to," said Lady Culduff, angrily. "Not but, for my part, I'd equally refuse her leave to touch the moulding in the surbase. I am glad, however, she has addressed this demand to us, for I know well Augustus is weak enough to comply with it, and fancy himself a hero in consequence. There is something piquant in the way she hints that she is asking as a favour what, for all she knows, might be claimed as a right."

"Imagine the woman saying this !"

"It is like asking me for the key of my writing-desk to see if I have not some paper or letter there that might, if published, give me grave inconvenience."

"I have often heard of her eccentricities and absurdities, but on this occasion I believe she has actually outdone herself. I suppose, though this appeal is made to us conjointly, as it is addressed to me I am the proper person to reply to it."

"Certainly, my lady."

"And I may say,—Lord Culduff feels shocked equally with myself at the indelicacy of the step you have just taken ; failing to respect the tie which connects you with our family, you might, he opines, have had some regards for the decencies which regulate social intercourse, and while bearing our name, not have ranked yourself with those who declare themselves our enemies. I may say this, I may tell her that her conduct is shameless, an outrage on all feeling, and not only derogatory to her station, but unwomanly ?"

"I don't think I'd say that," said he, with a faint simper, while he patted his hand with a gold paper-knife. "I opine the better way would be to accept her ladyship's letter as the most natural thing in life *from her* ; that she had proffered a request which, coming from *her*, was all that was right and reasonable. That there was something very noble and very elevated in the way she could rise superior to personal interests and the ties of kindred, and actually assert the claims of more justice ; but I'd add that the decision could not lie with us,—that your brother, being the head of the family, was the person to whom the request must be addressed, and that we would, with her permission, charge ourselves with the task. Pray hear me out—first of all, we have a delay while she replies to this, with or without the permission we ask for ; in that interval you can inform your brother that a very serious plot is being concerted against him ; that your next letter will fully inform him as to the details of the conspiracy,—your present advice being simply for warning, and then, when, if she still persist, the matter must be heard, it will be strange if Augustus shall not have come to the conclusion that the part intended for him is a very contemptible one—that of a dupe."

"Your lordship's mode may be more diplomatic ; mine would be more direct."

"Which is exactly its demerit, my lady," said he, with one of his

blandest smiles. "In *my* craft the great secret is never to give a flat refusal to anything. If the French were to ask us for the Isle of Wight, the proper reply would be a polite demand for the reasons that prompted the request, and a courteous assurance that they should meet with every consideration and a cordial disposition to make every possible concession that might lead to a closer union with a nation it was our pride and happiness to reckon on as an ally."

"These fallacies never deceive anyone."

"Nor are they meant to do so, any more than the words 'your most obedient and humble servant' at the foot of a letter; but they serve to keep correspondence within polite limits."

"And they consume time," broke she in, impatiently.

"And, as you observe so aptly, they consume time."

"Let us have done with trifling, my lord. I mean to answer this letter in my own way."

"I can have no other objection to make to that save the unnecessary loss of time I have incurred in listening to the matter."

"That time so precious to the nation you serve!" said she, sneeringly.

"Your ladyship admirably expresses my meaning."

"Then, my lord, I make you the only amends in my power; I take my leave of you."

"Your ladyship's politeness is never at fault," said he, rising to open the door for her.

"Has Temple told you that the box on the lower tier is now free—the box I spoke of?"

"He has; but our stay here is now uncertain. It may be days; it may be hours——"

"And why was I not told? I have been giving orders to tradespeople—accepting invitations—making engagements, and what not. Am I to be treated like the wife of a subaltern in a marching regiment—to hold myself ready to start when the route comes?"

"How I could envy that subaltern," said he, with an inimitable mixture of raillery and deference.

She darted on him a look of indignant anger, and swept out of the room.

Lord Culduff rang his bell, and told the servant to beg Mr. Temple Bramleigh would have the kindness to step down to him.

"Write to Filangieri, Temple," said he, "and say that I desire to have access to the prisoner Rogers. We know nothing of his escape, and the demand will embarrass—there, don't start objections, my dear boy; I never play a card without thinking what the enemy will do after he scores the trick." And with this profound encomium on himself he dismissed the secretary and proceeded to read the morning papers.

CHAPTER LIII.

A RAINY NIGHT AT SEA.

THE absurd demand preferred by Lady Augusta in her letter to Marion was a step taken without any authority from Pracontal, and actually without his knowledge. On the discovery of the adhering pages of the journal, and their long consideration of the singular memorandum that they found within, Pracontal carried away the book to Longworth to show him the passage and ask what importance he might attach to its contents.

Longworth was certainly struck by the minute particularity with which an exact place was indicated. There was a rough pen sketch of the Flora, and a spot marked by a cross at the base of the pedestal with the words, "Here will be found the books." Lower down on the same page was written, "These volumes, which I did not obtain without difficulty, and which were too cumbersome to carry away, I have deposited in this safe place, and the time may come when they will be of value.—G. L."

"Now," said Longworth, after some minutes of deep thought, "Lami was a man engaged in every imaginable conspiracy. There was not a State in Europe, apparently, where he was not, to some extent, compromised. These books he refers to may be the records of some secret society, and he may have stored them there as a security against the lukewarmness or the treachery of men whose fate might be imperilled by certain documents. Looking to the character of Lami, his intense devotion to these schemes, and his crafty nature and the Italian forethought which seems always to have marked whatever he did, I half incline to this impression. Then, on the other hand, you remember, Pracontal, when we went over to Portshandon to inquire about the registry books, we heard that they had all been stolen or destroyed by the rebels in '98?"

"Yes, I remember that well. I had not attached any importance to the fact; but I remember how much Kelson was disconcerted and put out by the intelligence, and how he continually repeated, 'This is no accident; this is no accident.'"

"It would be a rare piece of fortune if they were the church registers, and that they contained a formal registry of the marriage."

"But who doubts it?"

"Say rather, my dear friend, why should anyone believe it? Just think for one moment who Montagu Bramleigh was, what was his station and his fortune, and then remember the interval that separated him from the Italian painter—a man of a certain ability, doubtless. Is it the most likely thing in the world that if the young Englishman fell in love with the beautiful Italian, that he would have sacrificed his whole ambition in life to his passion? Is it not far more probable, in fact, that no marriage whatever united them? Come, come, Pracontal, this is not, now at least, a matter to grow sulky over; you cannot be angry or indignant at my

frankness, and you'll not shoot me for this slur on your grandmother's fair reputation."

"I certainly think that with nothing better than a theory to support it, you might have spared her memory this aspersion."

"If I had imagined you could not talk of it as unconcernedly as myself, I assure you I would never have spoken about it."

"You see now, however, that you have mistaken me—that you have read me rather as one of your own people than as a Frenchman," said the other, warmly.

"I certainly see that I must not speak to you with frankness, and I shall use caution not to offend you by candour."

"This is not enough, sir," said the Frenchman, rising and staring angrily at him.

"What is not enough?" said Longworth, with a perfect composure.

"Not enough for apology, sir; not enough as *"amende"* for an unwarrantable and insolent calumny."

"You are getting angry at the sound of your own voice, Pracontal. I now tell you that I never meant—never could have meant—to offend you. You came to me for a counsel which I could only give by speaking freely what was in my mind. This is surely enough for apology."

"Then let it all be forgotten at once," cried the other, warmly.

"I'll not go that far," said Longworth, in the same calm tone as before. "You have accepted my explanation; you have recognised what one moment of justice must have convinced you of—that I had no intention to wound your feelings. There is certainly, however, no reason in the world why I should expose my own to any unnecessary injury. I have escaped a peril; I have no wish to incur another of the same sort."

"I don't think I understand you," said Pracontal, quickly. "Do you mean we should quarrel?"

"By no means."

"That we should separate, then?"

"Certainly."

The Frenchman became pale, and suddenly his face flushed till it was deep crimson, and his eyes flashed with fire. The effort to be calm was almost a strain beyond his strength; but he succeeded, and in a voice scarcely above a whisper, he said, "I am deeply in your debt; I cannot say how deeply. My lawyer, however, does know, and I will confer with him."

"This is a matter of small consequence, and does not press: besides, I beg you will not let it trouble you."

The measured coldness with which these words were spoken seemed to jar painfully on Pracontal's temper, for he snatched his hat from the table, and with a hurried, "Adieu—adieu, then," left the room. The carriages of the hotel were waiting in the courtyard to convey the travellers to the station.

"Where is the train starting for?" asked he of a waiter.

"For Civita, sir."

"Step up to my room, then, and throw my clothes into a portmanteau—enough for a few days. I shall have time to write a note, I suppose?"

"Ample, sir. You have forty minutes yet."

Pracontal opened his writing-desk and wrote a few lines to Lady Augusta, to tell how a telegram had just called him away,—it might be to Paris, perhaps London. He would be back within ten days, and explain all. He wished he might have her leave to write, but he had not a moment left him to ask the permission. Should he risk the liberty? What if it might displease her? He was every way unfortunate; nor, in all the days of a life of changes and vicissitudes, did he remember a sadder moment than this in which he wrote himself her devoted servant, A. Pracontal de Bramleigh. This done, he jumped into a carriage, and just reached the train in time to start for Civita.

There was little of exaggeration when he said he had never known greater misery and depression than he now felt. The thought of that last meeting with Longworth overwhelmed him with sorrow. When we bear in mind how slowly and gradually the edifice of friendship is built up; how many of our prejudices have often to be overcome; how much of self-education is effected in the process; the thought that all this labour of time and feeling should be cast to the winds at once for a word of passion or a hasty expression, is humiliating to a degree. Pracontal had set great store by Longworth's friendship for him. He had accepted great favours at his hand, but so kindly and so gracefully conferred as to double the obligations by the delicacy with which they were bestowed. And this was the man whose good feeling for him he had outraged and insulted beyond recall. "If it had been an open quarrel between us, I could have stood his fire and shown him how thoroughly I knew myself in the wrong; but his cold disdain is more than I can bear. And what was it all about? How my old comrades would laugh if they heard that I had quarrelled with my best friend. Ah, my grandmother's reputation! *Ma foi*, how much more importance one often attaches to a word than to what it represents!" Thus angry with himself, mocking the very pretensions on which he had assumed to reprehend his friend, and actually ridiculing his own conduct, he embarked from Marseilles to hasten over to England, and entreat Kendal to discharge the money obligation which yet bound him to Longworth.

It was a rough night at sea, and the packet so crowded by passengers that Pracontal was driven to pass the night on deck. In the haste of departure he had not provided himself with overcoats or rugs, and was but ill-suited to stand the severity of a night of cold cutting wind and occasional drifts of hail. To keep himself warm he walked the deck for hours, pacing rapidly to and fro: perhaps not sorry at heart that physical discomfort compelled him to dwell less on the internal griefs that preyed upon him. One solitary passenger besides himself had sought the deck, and he had rolled himself in a multiplicity of warm wrappers, and lay snugly under the shelter of the binnacle—a capacious tarpaulin cloak surmounting all his other integuments.

Pracontal's campaigning experiences had taught him that the next best thing to being well-cloaked oneself is to lie near the man that is so; and thus seeing that the traveller was fast asleep, he stretched himself under his lee, and even made free to draw a corner of the heavy tarpaulin over him.

"I say," cried the stranger, on discovering a neighbour; "I say, old fellow, you are coming it a bit too free and easy. You've stripped my covering off my legs."

"A thousand pardons," rejoined Pracontal. "I forgot to take my rugs and wraps with me; and I am shivering with cold. I have not even an overcoat."

The tone—so evidently that of a gentleman, and the slight touch of a foreign accent—apparently at once conciliated the stranger, for he said, "I have enough and to spare: spread this blanket over you; and here's a cushion for a pillow."

These courtesies, accepted frankly as offered, soon led them to talk together; and the two men speedily found themselves chatting away like old acquaintances.

"I am puzzling myself," said the stranger at last, "to find out are you an Englishman who has lived long abroad, or are you a foreigner?"

"Is my English so good as that?" asked Pracontal, laughing.

"The very best I ever heard from any not a born Briton."

"Well, I'm a Frenchman—or a half Frenchman—with some Italian and some English blood, too, in me."

"Ah! I knew you must have had a dash of John Bull in you. No man ever spoke such English as yours without it."

"Well, but my English temperament goes two generations back. I don't believe my father was ever in England."

With this opening they talked away about national traits and peculiarities: the Frenchman with all the tact and acuteness travel and much intercourse with life conferred; and the other with the especial shrewdness that marks a Londoner. "How did you guess I was a Cockney?" asked he, laughingly. "I don't take liberties with my H.'s."

"If you had, it's not likely I'd have known it," said Pracontal. "But your reference to town, the fidelity with which you clung to what London would think of this, or say to that, made me suspect you to be a Londoner; and I see I was right."

"After all, you Frenchmen are just as full of Paris."

"Because Paris epitomises France, and France is the greatest of all countries."

"I'll not stand that. I deny it *in toto*."

"Well, I'll not open the question now, or, maybe, you'd make me give up this blanket."

"No. I'll have the matter out on fair grounds. Keep the blanket, but just let me hear on what grounds you claim precedence for France before England."

"I'm too unlucky in matters of dispute to-day," said Pracontal, sadly,

"to open a new discussion. I quarrelled with, perhaps, the best friend I had in the world this morning for a mere nothing; and though there is little fear that anything we could say to each other now would provoke ill-feeling between us, I'll run no risks."

"By Jove! it must be Scotch blood is in you. I never heard of such caution!"

"No, I believe my English connection is regular Saxon. When a man has been in the newspapers in England, he need not affect secrecy or caution in talking of himself. I figured in a trial lately; I don't know if you read the cause. It was tried in Ireland—Count Bramleigh de Pracontal against Bramleigh."

"What, are you Pracontal?" cried the stranger, starting to a sitting posture.

"Yes. Why are you so much interested?"

"Because I have seen the place. I have been over the property in dispute, and the question naturally interests me."

"Ha! you know Castello, then?"

"Castello, or Bishop's Folly. I know it best by the latter name."

"And whom am I speaking to?" said Pracontal; "for as you know me perhaps I have some right to ask this."

"My name is Cuthill; and now that you've heard it, you're nothing the wiser."

"You probably know the Bramleighs?"

"Every one of them; Augustus, the eldest, I am intimate with."

"It's not my fault that I have no acquaintance with him. I desired it much; and Lady Augusta conveyed my wish to Mr. Bramleigh, but he declined. I don't know on what grounds; but he refused to meet me, and we have never seen each other."

"If I don't greatly mistake, you ought to have met. I hope it may not be yet too late."

"Ah, but it is! We are 'en pleine guerre' now, and the battle must be fought out. It is he, and not I, would leave the matter to this issue. I was for a compromise; I would have accepted an arrangement; I was unwilling to overthrow a whole family and consign them to ruin. They might have made their own terms with me; but no, they preferred to defy me. They determined I should be a mere pretender. They gave me no alternative; and I fight because there is no retreat open to me."

"And yet if you knew Bramleigh——"

"Mon cher; he would not give me the chance; he repulsed the offer I made; he would not touch the hand I held out to him."

"I am told that the judge declared that he never tried a cause where the defendant displayed a more honourable line of conduct."

"That is all true. Kelson, my lawyer, said that everything they did was straightforward and creditable; but he said, too, don't go near them, don't encourage any acquaintance with them, or some sort of arrangement will be patched up which will leave everything unsettled to another genera-

tion ;—when all may become once more litigated, with less light to guide a decision and far less chance of obtaining evidence."

"Never mind the lawyers, Count, never mind the lawyers. Use your own good sense and your own generous instincts ; place yourself—in idea—in Bramleigh's position, and ask yourself, could you act more handsomely than he has done ? and then bethink you what is the proper way to meet such conduct."

"It's all too late for this now ; don't ask me why, but take my word for it, it is too late."

"It's never too late to do the right thing, though it may cost a man some pain to own he is changing his mind."

"It's not that ; it's not that," said the other, peevishly, "though I cannot explain to you why or how."

"I don't want to hear secrets," said Cutbill, bluntly ; "all the more that you and I are strangers to each other. I don't think either of us has had a good look at the other's face yet."

"I've seen yours, and I don't distrust it," said the Frenchman.

"Good night, then, that's a civil speech to go to sleep over," and so saying, he rolled over to the other side and drew his blanket over his head.

Pracental lay a long time awake, thinking of the strange companion he had chanced upon, and that still stranger amount of intimacy that had grown up between them. I suppose, muttered he to himself, I must be the most indiscreet fellow in the world ; but after all, what have I said that he has not read in the newspapers, or may not read next week or the week after ? I know how Kelson would condemn me for this careless habit of talking of myself and my affairs to the first man I meet on a railroad or a steamer ; but I must be what nature made me, and after all, if I show too much of my hand, I gain something by learning what the bystanders say of it.

It was not till high daybreak that he dropped off to sleep ; and when he awoke it was to see Mr. Cutbill with a large bowl of hot coffee in one hand, and a roll in the other, making an early breakfast ; a very rueful figure, too, was he—as, black with smoke and coal-dust, he propped himself against the hinnaale, and gazed out over the waste of waters.

"You are a good sailor, I see, and don't fear sea-sickness," said Pracental.

"Don't I ? that's all you know of it ; but I take everything they bring me. There's a rasher on its way to me now, if I survive this."

"I'm for a basin of cold water and coarse towels," said the other, rising.

"That's two points in your favour towards having English blood in you," said Cutbill, gravely, for already his qualms were returning ; "when a fellow tells you he cares for soap, he can't be out and out a Frenchman." This speech was delivered with great difficulty, and when it was done he rolled over and covered himself up, over face and head, and spoke no more,

CHAPTER LIV.

THE LETTER BAG.

WHAT a mail-bag!" cried Nelly, as she throw several letters on the breakfast-table; the same breakfast-table being laid under a spreading vine, all drooped and festooned with a gorgeous clematis.

"I declare," said Augustus, "I'd rather look out yonder, over the blue gulf of Cattaro, than see all the post could bring me."

"This is for you," said Nelly, handing a letter to L'Estrange.

He reddened as he took it; not that he knew either the writing or the seal, but that terrible consciousness which besets the poor man in life leads him always to regard the unknown as pregnant with misfortune; and so he pocketed his letter, to read it when alone and unobserved.

"Here's Cutbill again. I don't think I care for more Cutbill," said Bramleigh; "and here's Sedley; Sedley will keep. This is from Marion."

"Oh, let us hear Marion by all means," said Nelly. "May I read her, Gusty?" He nodded, and she broke the envelope. "Ten lines and a postscript. She's positively expansive this time:—

"Victoria, Naples.

"MY DEAR GUSTY,—Our discreet and delicate stepmother has written to ask me to intercede with you to permit M. Pracontal to pull down part of the house at Castello, to search for some family papers. I have replied that her demand is both impracticable and indecent. Be sure that you make a like answer if she addresses you personally. We mean to leave this soon; but are not yet certain in what direction. We have been shamefully treated, after having brought this troublesome and difficult negotiation to a successful end. We shall withdraw our proxy.

"Yours ever, in much affection,

"MARION CULDUFF.

"P.S.—You have heard, I suppose, that Culduff has presented L'Estrange to a living. It's not in a hunting county, so that he will not be exposed to temptation; nor are there any idle young men, and Julia may also enjoy security. Do you know where they are?"

They laughed long and heartily over this postscript. Indeed, it amused them to such a degree that they forgot all the preceding part of the letter. As to the fact of the presentation, none believed it. Read by the light of Cutbill's former letter, it was plain enough that it was only one of those pious frauds which diplomacy deals in as largely as Popery. Marion, they were sure, supposed she was recording a fact; but her comments on the fact were what amused them most.

"I wonder am I a flirt?" said Julia, gravely.

"I wonder am I a vicar?" said George; and once more the laughter broke out fresh and hearty.

"Let us have Outbill now, Nelly. It will be in a different strain. He's lengthy, too. He not only writes on four, but six sides of note-paper this time."

"DEAR BRAMLEIGH,—You will be astonished to hear that I travelled back to England with Count Pracontal, or Bramleigh de Pracontal, or whatever his name be—a right good fellow, frank, straightforward, and, so far as I see, honest. We hit it off wonderfully together, and became such good friends that I took him down to my little crib at Bayswater,—an attention, I suspect, not ill-timed, as he does not seem flush of money. He told me the whole story of his claim, and the way he came first to know that he had a claim. It was all discovered by a book, a sort of manuscript journal of his great grandfather's, every entry of which he, Pracontal, believes to be true as the Bible. He does not remember ever to have seen his father, though he may have done so before he was put to the Naval School at Genoa. Of his mother, he knows nothing. From all I have seen of him, I'd say that you and he have only to meet to become warm and attached friends; and it's a thousand pities you should leave to law and lawyers what a little forbearance, and a little patience, and a disposition to behave generously on each side might have settled at once and for ever.

"In this journal that I mentioned there were two pages gummed together, by accident or design, and on one of these was a sketch of a female figure in a great wreath of flowers, standing on a sort of pedestal, on which was written,—“Behind this stone I have deposited books or documents.” I'm not sure of the exact words, for they were in Italian, and it was all I could do to master the meaning of the inscription. Now, Pracontal was so convinced that these papers have some great bearing on his claim, that he asked me to write to you to beg permission to make a search for them under the painting at Castello, of which this rough sketch is evidently a study. I own to you I feel little of that confidence that he reposes in this matter. I do not believe in the existence of the papers, nor see how, if there were any, that they could be of consequence. But his mind was so full of it, and he was so persistent in saying, “If I thought this old journal could mislead me, I'd cease to believe my right to be as good as I now regard it,” that I thought I could not do better, in your interest, than to take him with me to Sedley's, to see what that shrewd old fox would say to him. P. agreed at once to go; and, what pleased me much, never thought of communicating with his lawyer nor asking his advice on the step.

"Though I took the precaution to call on Sedley, and tell him what sort of man P. was, and how prudent it would be to hear him with a show of frankness and cordiality, that hard old dog was as stern and as unbending as if he was dealing with a housebreaker. He said he had no instructions from you to make this concession; that, though he himself attached not the slightest importance to any paper that might be found,

were he to be consulted, he would unquestionably refuse this permission ; that Mr. Bramleigh knew his rights too well to be disposed to encourage persons in frivolous litigation ; and that the coming trial would scatter these absurd pretensions to the winds, and convince M. Pracontal and his friends that it would be better to address himself seriously to the business of life than pass his existence in prosecuting a hopeless and impossible claim.

"I was much provoked at the sort of lecturing tone the old man assumed, and struck with astonishment at the good-temper and good-breeding with which the other took it. Only once he showed a slight touch of resentment, when he said, "Have a care, sir, that, while disparaging my pretensions, you suffer nothing to escape you that shall reflect on the honour of those who belong to me. I will overlook everything that relates to *me*. I will pardon nothing that insults *their* memory." This finished the interview, and we took our leave. "We have not gained much by this step," said Pracontal, laughing, as we left the house. "Will you now consent to write to Mr. Bramleigh, for I don't believe he would refuse my request?" I told him I would take a night to think over it, and on the same evening came a telegram from Ireland to say that some strange discoveries were just being made in the Lisconnor mine ; that a most valuable "lode" had been artificially closed up, and that a great fraud had been practised to depreciate the value of the mine, and throw it into the market as a damaged concern, while its real worth was considerable. They desired me to go over at once and report, and Pracontal, knowing that I should be only a few miles from Bishop's Folly, to which he clings with an attachment almost incredible, determined to accompany me.

"I have no means of even guessing how long I may be detained in Ireland—possibly some weeks ; at all events let me have a line to say you will give me this permission. I say 'give *me*' because I shall strictly confine the investigation to the limits I myself think requisite, and in reality use the search as one means of testing what importance may attach to this journal, on which Pracontal relies so implicitly ; and in the event of the failure—that I foresee and would risk a bet upon—I would employ the disappointment as a useful agent in dissuading Pracontal from farther pursuit.

"I strongly urge you, therefore, not to withhold this permission. It seems rash to say that a man ought to furnish his antagonist with a weapon to fight him ; but you have always declared you want nothing but an honest, fair contest, wherein the best man should win. You have also said to me that you often doubted your own actual sincerity. You can test it now, and by a touchstone that cannot deceive. If you say to Pracontal, "There's the key, go in freely ; there is nothing to hide—nothing to fear," you will do more to strengthen the ground you stand on than by all the eloquence of your lawyer ; and if I know anything of this Frenchman, he is not the man to make an ill requital to such a generous

confidence. Whatever you decide on, reply at once. I have no time for more, but will take my letter with me and add a line when I reach Ireland.

“*Lisconnor, Friday Night.*”

“‘They were quite right; there was a most audacious fraud concocted, and a few days will enable me to expose it thoroughly. I’m glad Lord Culduff had nothing to say to it, but more for your sake than his. The L’Estranges are safe; they’ll have every shilling of their money, and with a premium, too.’”

Nelly laid down the letter and looked over to where George and his sister sat, still and motionless. It was a moment of deep feeling and intense relief, but none could utter a word. At last Julia said,—

“What a deal of kindness there is in that man, and how hard we felt it to believe it, just because he was vulgar. I declare I believe we must be more vulgar still to attach so much to form and so little to fact.”

“There is but one line more,” said Nelly, turning over the page.

“‘Pracontal has lost all his spirits. He has been over to see a place belonging to a Mr. Longworth here, and has come back so sad and depressed as though the visit had renewed some great sorrow. We have not gone to Bishop’s Folly yet, but mean to drive over there to-morrow. Once more, write to me.

“‘Yours ever,

“‘T. CUTBILL.’”

“I shall not give this permission,” said Bramleigh, thoughtfully. “Sedley’s opinion is decidedly adverse, and I shall abide by it.” Now, though he said these words with an air of apparent determination, he spoke in reality to provoke discussion and hear what others might say. None, however, spoke, and he waited some minutes. “I wish you would say if you agree with me,” cried he at last.

“I suspect very few would give the permission,” said Julia, “but that you are one of that few I believe also.”

“Yes, Gusty,” said Nelly. “Refuse it, and what becomes of that fair spirit in which you have so often said you desired to meet this issue?”

“What does George say?” asked Bramleigh. “Let’s hear the Church.”

“Well,” said L’Estrange, in that hesitating, uncertain way he usually spoke in, “if a man were to say to me, ‘I think I gave you a sovereign too much in change just now. Will you search your purse, and see if I’m not right?’ I suppose I’d do so.”

“And of course you mean that if the restitution rose to giving back some thousands a year, it would be all the same?” said Julia.

“It would be harder to do, perhaps—of course; I mean—but I hope I could do it.”

“And I,” said Bramleigh, in a tone that vibrated with feeling, “I hoped a few days back that no test to my honesty or my sincerity would have been too much for me—that all I asked or cared for was that the truth should prevail—I find myself now prevaricating with myself, hair-splitting,

and asking have I a right to do this, that, or t'other ? I declare to heaven, when a man takes refuge in that self-put question, 'Have I the right to do something that inclination tells me not to do ?' he is nearer a contemptible action than he knows of. And is there not one here will say that I ought, or ought not, to refuse this request ? "

"I do not suppose such a request was ever made before," said L'Estrange. "There lies the real difficulty of deciding what one should do."

"Here's a note from Mr. Sedley," cried Nelly. "Is it not possible that it may contain something that will guide us ? "

"By all means read Sedley," said Bramleigh. And she opened and read :—

"DEAR SIR,—A Mr. Cutbill presented himself to me here last week, alleging he was an old and intimate friend of yours, and showing unquestionable signs of being well acquainted with your affairs. He was accompanied by M. Pracontal, and came to request permission to make searches at Castello for certain documents which he declared to be of great importance to the establishment of his claim. I ~~will~~ not stop to say what I thought, or indeed said, of such a proposal, exceeding in effrontery anything I had ever listened to.

"Of course I not only refused this permission, but declared I would immediately write to you, insisting on no account or through any persuasion to yield to it.

"They left me, and apparently so disconcerted and dissuaded by my reception that I did not believe it necessary to address you on the subject. To my amazement, however, I learn from Kelson this morning that they actually did gain entrance to the house, and by means which I have not yet ascertained prosecuted the search they desired, and actually discovered the church registers of Portshandon, in one page of which is the entry of the marriage of Montagu Bramleigh and Enrichetta Lami, with the name of the officiating clergyman and the attendant witnesses. Kelson forwards me a copy of this, while inviting me to inspect the original. My first step, however, has been to take measures to proceed against these persons for robbery ; and I have sent over one of my clerks to Ireland to obtain due information as to the events that occurred, and to institute proceedings immediately. There can be no doubt as to the guilt of what they have done, and I shall push the case to its extreme consequences.

"The important fact, however, lies in this act of registration, which, however fraudulently obtained, will be formidable evidence on a trial. You are certainly not happy in your choice of friends, if this Mr. Cutbill be one of them, but I hope no false sentiment will induce you to step between this man and his just punishment. He has done you an irreparable mischief, and by means the most shameful and inexcusable. I call the mischief irreparable, since, looking to the line of argument adopted by our leading counsel on the last trial, the case chiefly turned on the discredit that attached to this act of marriage. I cannot therefore exaggerate the mischief this discovery has brought us. You must come

over at once. The delay incurred by letter writing, and the impossibility of profiting by any new turn events may take, renders your presence here essential, and without it I declare I cannot accept any further responsibility in this case.

"A very flippant note from Mr. Cutbill has just reached me. He narrates the fact of the discovered books, and says, "It is not too late for B. to make terms. Send for him at once, and say that Count P. has no desire to push him to the wall." It is very hard to stomach this man's impertinence, but I hesitate now as to what course to take regarding him. Let me hear by telegraph that you are coming over; for I repeat that I will not engage myself to assume the full responsibility of this case, or take any decisive step without your sanction."

"What could Cutbill mean by such conduct?" cried Nelly. "Do you understand it at all, Gusty?" Bramleigh merely shook his head in token of negative.

"It all came of the man's meddlesome disposition," said Julia. "The mischievous people of the world are not the malevolent—they only do harm with an object; but the meddling creatures are at it day and night, scattering seeds of trouble out of very idleness."

"Ju's right," said George; but in such a tone of habitual approval that set all the rest laughing.

"I need not discuss the question of permitting the search," said Bramleigh; "these gentlemen have saved me *that*: The only point now open is, shall I go over to England or not?"

"Go-by all means," said Julia, eagerly. "Mr. Sedley's advice cannot be gainsayed."

"But it seems to me our case is lost," said he, as his eyes turned to Nelly, whose face expressed deep sorrow.

"I fear so," said she, in a faint whisper.

"Then why ask me to leave this, and throw myself into a hopeless contest? Why am I to quit this spot, where I have found peace and contentment, to encounter the struggle that, even with all my conviction of failure, will still move me to hope and expectancy?"

"Just because a brave soldier fights even after defeat seems certain," said Julia. "More than one battle has been won from those who had already despatched news of their victory."

"You may laugh at me, if you like," said L'Estrange, "but Julia is right there." And they did laugh, and the laughter was so far good that it relieved the terrible tension of their nerves, and rallied them back to ease and quietude.

"I see," said Bramleigh, "that you all think I ought to go over to England; and though none of you can know what it will cost me in feeling, I will go."

"There's a messenger from the Podestà of Cattaro waiting all this time, Gusty, to know about this English sailor they have arrested. The authorities desire to learn if you will take him off their hands."

"George is my vice-consul. He shall deal with him," said Bramleigh, laughing, "for as the steamer touches at two o'clock, I shall be run sharp to catch her. If anyone will help me to pack, I'll be more than grateful."

"We'll do it in a committee of the whole house," said Julia, "for when a man's trunk is once corded, he never goes back of his journey."

CHAPTER LV.

THE PRISONER AT CATTARO.

So much occupied and interested were the little household of the villa in Bramleigh's departure—there were so many things to be done, so many things to be remembered—that L'Estrange never once thought of the messenger from the Maire, who still waited patiently for his answer.

"I declare," said Julia, "that poor man is still standing in the hall. For pity's sake, George, give him some answer, and send him away."

"But what is the answer to be, Ju? I have not the faintest notion of how these cases are dealt with."

"Let us look over what that great book of instructions says. I used to read a little of it every day when we came first, and I worried Mr. Bramleigh so completely with my superior knowledge that he carried it off, and hid it."

"Oh, I remember now. He told me he had left it at the consulate, for that you were positively driving him distracted with official details."

"How ungrateful men are! They never know what good 'nagging' does them. It is the stimulant that converts half the sluggish people in the world into reasonably active individuals."

"Perhaps we are occasionally over-stimulated," said George, drily.

"If so, it is by your own vanity. Men are spoiled by their fellow-men, and not by women. There now, you look very much puzzled at that paradox—as you'd like to call it—but go away and think over it, and say this evening if I'm not right."

"Very likely you are," said he, in his indolent way; "but whether or not, you always beat me in a discussion."

"And this letter from the Podestà; who is to reply, or what is the reply to be?"

"Well," said he, after a pause, "I think of the two I'd rather speak bad Italian than write it. I'll go down and see the Podestà."

"There's zeal and activity," said Julia, laughing. "Never disparage the system of nagging after that. Poor George," said she, as she looked after him while he set out for Cattaro, "he'd have a stouter heart to ride at a six-foot wall than for the interview that is now before him."

"And yet," said Nelly, "it was only a moment ago you were talking to him about his vanity."

"And I might as well have talked about his wealth. But you'd spoil

him, Nelly, if I wasn't here to prevent it. These indolent men get into the way of believing that languor and laziness are good temper, and as George is really a fine-hearted fellow, I'm angry when he falls back upon his lethargy for his character, instead of trusting, as he could and as he ought, to his good qualities."

Nelly blushed, but it was with pleasure. This praise of one she liked—liked even better than she herself knew—was intense enjoyment to her.

Let us now turn to L'Estrange, who strolled along towards Cattaro—now stopping to gather the wild anemones which, in every splendid variety of colour, decked the sward—now loitering to gaze at the blue sea, which lay still and motionless at his feet. There was that voluptuous sense of languor in the silence—the loaded perfume of the air—the drowsy hum of insect life—the faint plash with which the sea, unstirred by wind, washed the shore—that harmonized to perfection with his own nature; and could he but have had Nelly at his side to taste the happiness with him, he would have deemed it exquisite, for, poor fellow, he was in love after his fashion. It was not an ardent impulsive passion, but it consumed him slowly and certainly, all the same. He knew well that his present life of indolence and inactivity could not, ought not, to continue—that without some prompt effort on his part his means of subsistence would be soon exhausted; but as the sleeper begs that he may be left to slumber on, and catch up, if he may, the dream that has just been broken, he seemed to entreat of Fate a little longer of the delicious trance in which he now was living. His failures in life had deepened in him that sense of humility which in coarse natures turns to misanthropy, but in men of finer mould makes them gentle, and submissive, and impressionable. His own humble opinion of himself deprived him of all hope of winning Nelly's affection, but he saw—or he thought he saw—in her that love of simple pleasures and of a life removed from all ambitions, that led him to believe she would not regard his pretensions with disdain. And then he felt that, thrown together into that closer intimacy their poverty had brought about, he had maintained towards her a studious deference and respect which had amounted almost to coldness, for he dreaded that she should think he would have adventured, in their fallen fortunes, on what he would never have dared in their high and palmy days.

"Well," said he, aloud, as he looked at the small fragment of an almost finished cigar, "I suppose it is nigh over now! I shall have to go and seek my fortune in Queensland, or New Zealand, or some far away country, and all I shall carry with me will be the memory of this dream—for it is a dream—of our life here. I wonder shall I ever, as I have seen other men, throw myself into my work, and efface the thought of myself, and of my own poor weak nature, in the higher interests that will press on me for action."

What should he do if men came to him for guidance, or counsel, or consolation. Could he play the hypocrite, and pretend to give what he had not got? or tell them to trust to what he bitterly knew was not the sus-

taining principle of his own life? "This shall be so no longer," cried he; "if I cannot go heart and soul into my work, I'll turn farmer or fisherman. I'll be what I can be without shame and self-reproach. One week more of this happiness—one week—and I vow to tear myself from it for ever."

As he thus muttered, he found himself in the narrow street that led into the centre of the little town, which, blocked up by fruit-stalls and fish-baskets, required all his address to navigate. The whole population, too, were screaming out their wares in the shrill cries of the South, and invitations to buy were blended with droll sarcasms on rival productions and jeering comments on the neighbours. Though full of deference for the unmistakable signs of gentleman in his appearance, they did not the less direct their appeals to him as he passed, and the flatteries on his handsome face and graceful figure mingled with the praises of whatever they had to sell.

Half amused, but not a little flurried by all the noise and tumult around him, L'Estrange made his way through the crowd till he reached the dingy entrance which led to the still dingier stair of the Podestà's residence.

L'Estrange had scarcely prepared the speech in which he should announce himself as charged with consular functions, when he found himself in presence of a very dirty little man, with spectacles and a skull cap, whose profuse civilities and ceremonious courtesies actually overwhelmed him. He assured L'Estrange that there were no words in Italian—nor even in German, for he spoke both—which could express a fractional part of the affliction he experienced in enforcing measures that savoured of severity on a subject of that great nation which had so long been the faithful friend and ally of the imperial house. On this happy political union it was clear he had prepared himself historically, for he gave a rapid sketch of the first empire, and briefly threw off a spirited description of the disastrous consequences of the connection with France, and the passing estrangement from Great Britain. By this time, what between the difficulties of a foreign tongue, and a period with which the poor parson was not, historically, over conversant, he was completely mystified and bewildered. At last the great functionary condescended to become practical. He proceeded to narrate that an English sailor, who had been landed at Ragusa by some Greek coasting-vessel, had come over on foot to Cattaro to find his consul as a means of obtaining assistance to reach England. There were, however, suspicious circumstances about the man that warranted the police in arresting him and carrying him off to prison. First of all, he was very poor, almost in rags, and emaciated to a degree little short of starvation. These were signs that vouched little for a man's character; indeed, the Podestà thought them damaging in the last degree; but there were others still worse. There were marks on his wrists and ankles which showed he had lately worn manacles and fetters—unmistakable marks; marks which the practised eyes of gendarmes had declared must have been produced by the heavy chains worn by galley-slaves, so that the man was, without doubt, an escaped convict, and might be, in consequence, a very dangerous individual.

As the prisoner spoke neither Italian nor German there were no means of interrogating him. They had therefore limited themselves to taking him into custody, and now held him at the disposal of the consular authority, to deal with him as it might please.

"May I see him?" asked L'Estrange.

"By all means; he is here. We have had him brought from the prison awaiting your excellency's arrival. Perhaps you would like to have him handcuffed before he is introduced. The brigadier recommends it."

"No, no. If the poor creature be in the condition you tell me, he cannot be dangerous." And the stalwart curate threw a downward look at his own brawny proportions with a satisfied smile that did not show much fear.

The brigadier whispered something in the Podestà's ear in a low tone, and the great man then said aloud,—“He tells me that he could slip the handcuffs on him now quite easily, for the prisoner is sound asleep, and so overcome by fatigue that he hears nothing.”

"No, no," reiterated L'Estrange. "Let us have no handcuffs; and with your good permission, too, I would ask another favour: let the poor fellow take his sleep out. It will be quite time enough for me to see him when he awakes."

The Podestà turned a look of mingled wonder and pity on the man who could show such palpable weakness in official life; but he evidently felt he could not risk his dignity by concurrence in such a line of conduct.

"If your excellency," said he, "tells me it is in this wise prisoners are treated in your country, I have no more to say."

"Well, well; let him be brought up," said L'Estrange, hastily, and more than ever anxious to get free of this Austrian Dogberry.

Nothing more was said on either side while the brigadier went down to bring up the prisoner. The half-darkened room, the stillness, the dreary ticking of a clock that made the silence more significant, all impressed L'Estrange with a mingled feeling of weariness and depression; and that strange melancholy that steals over men at times, when all the events of human life seem sad-coloured and dreary, now crept over him, when the shuffling sounds of feet, and the clanging of a heavy sabre, apprised him that the escort was approaching.

"We have no treaty with any of the Italian Governments," said the Maire, "for extradition; and if the man be a galley-slave, as we suspect, we throw all the responsibility of his case on you." As he spoke, the door opened, and a young man with a blue flannel shirt and linen trousers entered, freeing himself from the hands of the gendarmes with a loose shake, as though to say, "In presence of my countryman in authority, I owe no submission to these." He leaned on the massive rail that formed a sort of barrier in the room, and with one hand pushed back the long hair that fell heavily over his face.

"What account do you give of yourself, my man?" said L'Estrange, in a tone half-commanding, half-encouraging.

"I have come here to ask my consul to send me on to England, or to some seaport where I may find a British vessel," said the man, and his voice was husky and weak, like that of one just out of illness.

"How did you come to these parts?" asked L'Estrange.

"I was picked up at sea by a Greek trabaccolo, and landed at Antivari; the rest of the way I came on foot."

"Were you cast away? or how came it that you were picked up?"

"I made my escape from the Bagni at Ischia. I had been a galley-slave there." The bold effrontery of the declaration was made still more startling by a sort of low laugh which followed his words.

"You seem to think it a light matter to have been at the galleys, my friend," said L'Estrange, half reprovingly. "How did it happen that an Englishman should be in such a discreditable position?"

"It's a long story—too long for a hungry man to tell," said the sailor; "perhaps too long for your own patience to listen to. At all events, it has no bearing on my present condition."

"I'm not so sure of that, my good fellow. Men are seldom sentenced to the galleys for light offences; and I'd like to know something of the man I'm called on to befriend."

"I make you the same answer I gave before,—the story would take more time than I have well strength for. Do you know," said he, earnestly, and in a voice of touching significance, "it is twenty-eight hours since I have tasted food?"

L'Estrange leaned forward in his chair, like one expecting to hear more, and eager to catch the words aright; and then rising, walked over to the rail where the prisoner stood. "You have not told me your name," said he, in a voice of kindly meaning.

"I have been called Sam Rogers for some time back; and I mean to be Sam Rogers a little longer."

"But it is not your real name?" asked L'Estrange, eagerly.

The other made no reply for some seconds; and then moving his hand carelessly through his hair, said, in a half reckless way, "I declare, sir, I can't see what you have to do with my name, whether I be Sam Rogers, or—or—anything else I choose to call myself. To you—I believe, at least—to you I am simply a distressed British sailor."

"And you are Jack Bramleigh?" said L'Estrange, in a low tone, scarcely above a whisper, while he grasped the sailor's hands, and shook them warmly.

"And who are you?" said Jack, in a voice shaken and faltering.

"Don't you know me, my poor dear fellow? Don't you remember George L'Estrange?"

What between emotion and debility, this surprise unmanned him so that he staggered back a couple of paces, and sank down heavily, not fainting, but too weak to stand, too much overcome to utter.

Two Medieval Travellers.

In the year 1465 Leo, Lord of Rözmital and Blatinie, and brother-in-law of the King of Bohemia, confessed himself solemnly, and set out with a train of forty gentlemen to see "all the kingdoms of Christendom, and all their noteworthy things, both secular and religious."

As the Lord of Rözmital was a great man, it would have been derogatory, or perhaps impossible, for him to write the narrative of his own travels. But there were two men in his suite of less dignity, and probably of more education, who have each left us a series of rambling jottings describing what they saw and did with much naïveté and some sharpness of observation. Primarily their journals are amusing, but they are also valuable. There were not many men, until the Venetian ambassadors began their *Relazioni*, who made sketches of their foreign contemporaries; and probably none had seen so many peoples as did the Bohemian Ssassek and the Nuremberger Tetzel. They passed through Germany, Belgium, England, France, Spain, Portugal, and northern Italy; they have both spoken very frankly about their hosts; they have both drawn pictures of the aspect of the countries; and their different characters afford excellent opportunity for getting at the truth.

Ssassek must have been a courtier at the small court of Rözmital. He is rather pompous, very vain, very much swayed by the small slights or attentions which he received from the different kings whose guest his master was; but good-humoured, willing to admire and to like, and not without pretensions to taste. Tetzel was a rougher and less easy-tempered man, with a lurking dislike to foreign ways, and great impatience of the discomforts of travel in semi-civilized countries. He writes so much in an aldermanic spirit, his words grow so luscious over a feast, and his temper becomes so bitter in the frequent register of privations, that one is tempted to suppose him to have been some Nuremberg banker wrenched from his home as a golden milch cow for the journey.

Between richness of subject, therefore, and naïve display of individual character, many an hour can be pleasantly spent over the pages of the two old travellers. But then the condition of this enjoyment is ability and willingness to read the bald Latin into which the Bohemian of Ssassek was translated some time after his death, and the much more puzzling fifteenth century South German in which Tetzel recorded his experiences. Ability may of course be presumed in every reader, but willingness would imply a liking for toil which I will not insult his common sense by supposing to exist, and I shall therefore throw together a few notes on some of the many matters which suggest themselves for extraction. That any of

the old character will be preserved I can scarcely hope; modern English lends itself reluctantly to a reproduction of mediæval style, with its queer mixture of freshness and stiffness, of clumsiness and conventionalism. But incoherence can at least be preserved, and I shall make no apology for following the originals in their own random way.

It is not worth while to trace the earlier steps of either chronicler. As Germans, accustomed to German things and manners, they are dry and uninterested as long as they remain on German soil. Unknowing of the future glories of the house of Brandenburg, they pass carelessly over the court at Anspach, and reserve their words for reverential expatiation on the relics of the cathedrals of Cologne and Aix. Belgium is the beginning of strangeness; the common objects around them for the first time excite their observation, and the tide at Malines and the three hundred windmills at Ghent are cursorily mentioned; but the courtly Ssassek enlarges only upon the greatness of the Duke of Burgundy, "at least the equal in riches and power of any prince in Christendom, lord of fourteen dukes and counts innumerable." From some scattered expressions one fact of greater interest may be gleaned. It would not of course be imagined that in the turbulent days of the fourteenth century the country of Brabant and Flanders would be cultivated with that exquisite minuteness which marks the spade husbandry of modern Belgium; but it is nevertheless surprising to be told that the entire space between Mechlin and Ghent and Bruges was arid in some places and a marsh in others, and that the whole country was so destitute of wood that the guest of the Duke was reduced to burn cow-dung for fuel. The great populations of Bruges and Ghent seem to have been sharply divided by their walls from a region made desert and almost uninhabited by their feuds between each other and their counts.

From Calais the travellers sailed for England, and after passing Dover, which is noticed as being one of the strongest and best armed fortresses in Christendom, they landed at Sandwich, then the great port of entry from the Continent. Incidentally, a custom is spoken of as existent there, of the terrors of which a faint idea may be formed by old people who can remember the habits of almost forgotten watchmen. Every night, from time to time, the streets were paced by a band of men blowing trumpets and horns, and shouting in the intervals of their instrumental noise from what quarter the wind came and the state of the weather; so that merchants and skippers might rouse themselves, if necessary, to go on board the ships. It was very well for the merchants and skippers, but the mind shrinks from picturing to itself the misery which must have been suffered by the quieter inhabitants of the place. Sandwich has ceased to be a port. History does not record, it is true, that its decadence was connected with the habit of trumpeting; but history rarely condescends to actual causes.

It is after England is entered that the interest of the journey fairly begins. Partly no doubt from the hospitality with which the Baron of Blatinie and all his retinue were received, and partly perhaps from the freshness with which the first thoroughly foreign country struck upon their

untravelling eyes, but partly also, it would seem, from a reasonable estimate of its comparative merit, England appears to have impressed Ssassek favourably in more points than any other of the many states which he traversed. Tetzel, though he places France in higher rank by calling it the "best furnished land which he had seen in his day in everything that man can think of," honours England by refraining from the querulousness in which he usually indulges. His summary of its characteristics, if without enthusiasm, is at least without ill temper. He says,—“ England is very small and narrow, but full of villages and towns, of castles and of woods. But there are great heaths, bearing willows, underwood, and reeds, and the sheep are the staple of the land. They feed on the same pastures winter and summer. There are many preserves (*tiergärten*), with many strange beasts, and men burn peat instead of wood; when they have not much wine, corn, or wood, then they bring them in over the sea, and the common folk drink a drink called ‘*al’selpir*’ ”—a compound beverage which, like the modern porter-beer, must have been created by the imagination of the foreigner. When he has said this, that London is full of goldsmiths, and that the tomb of St. Thomas of Canterbury is covered with precious stones, Tetzel has exhausted England. Not so with Ssassek. His general view is only introductory to lengthened particular description. According to him, “ England is not flat, but hilly and dense with many woods; but it does not produce black forests ” like the pine forests of the Erz Gebirge, “ and every wood is belted with a ditch, and the husbandmen in like manner carry ditches round their fields and meadows, and hedge them in, so that no one, whether on horse or foot, can pass except along a public road.” The descriptions differ and could hardly be reconciled, did we not hear that in leaving the kingdom the travellers passed over Hounslow and Bagshot, vastly larger no doubt in those than in later times, and skirted the New Forest to the bare heaths round Poole. Tetzel, taking foreign countries only on sufferance, was content with what he saw; his companion, more careful and liking better, had taken the trouble to inquire. We get a proof of this elsewhere, when apropos of nothing, he suddenly wanders off between a description of the cathedral and of the town of Salisbury, to say that England “ is a metal-bearing country. For its inhabitants dig silver and copper and tin and lead, and so the land is very rich. Moreover no small part of their wealth comes to the people from their flocks of sheep, which feed everywhere in immense numbers, and are almost all white, with now and then a black one among them. The wool of them is exchanged for no little money with foreign merchants, and is exported into divers regions.”

The mention of Salisbury may carry us, after his own inconsecutive manner, to the art judgments of Ssassek. We are flattered to learn that nowhere does he think that he has seen more “ elegant ” monasteries and churches than in England; and if respect for the grounds of his admiration is shaken when he goes on to give us his reasons—“ for all are roofed with lead and tin, and their interiors are wonderfully

adorned"—we are restored to confidence and pleasure when we find that the five churches upon which he dilates are the cathedrals of Canterbury, Salisbury, and Burgos, S. Ambrogio at Milan, and St. Mark at Venice. With the guarantee for his taste given by so excellent a choice, it is pleasant to hear that perhaps the most beautiful pictures which he anywhere saw were a Virgin and Child, an Angel opening the Tomb, and a Christ returned to Life, in the monastery of Salisbury. Using a formula—the equivalent of which is so well known to readers of Vasari, and which expresses to the present day the highest admiration of most people—he declares that *non ficta sed viva videantur*. Illustrated books of the fourteenth century are still preserved which render this excellence in painting less hard to understand than it would be were we to judge the probabilities of the past from the actualities of the present. We are also told, and have reason to believe, that nowhere was such sweet and pleasant music to be heard in those days as in London. It seems that our forefathers, like ourselves, were fond of great choruses, though one of sixty voices was considered to be exceptionally large.

It is curious in how many things which we are wont to consider modern the old world was like to the new one. No doubt a zoological garden of the fifteenth century presented a scene altogether different to that offered by the Fop's Alley of the Regent's Park; but there is a sufficiently strange savour of anachronism in the fact that zoological gardens existed at all. One marvels at the wealth in foreign beasts which could require two gardens to contain it; and still more what the "diverse kinds" of these "many animals" can have been. Henry I., it is true, had a lion and leopards, lynxes and porcupines at Woodstock; and a royal order, requiring the Sheriffs of London to build a house "for our elephant and his keeper," with another which directed that the white bear at the Tower should be allowed to fish in the river at the end of a chain, reveal the presence of these animals in the time of Henry III.; but it is at least not commonly known that any others than lions and leopards were habitually kept, and the questions, what were the inhabitants of the gardens in 1465, and where did they come from, and how were they obtained, must it is to be feared remain unanswered. Of Herr Sassek certainly it is vain to inquire. It is more natural to be told of "pleasaunces." They were as much the objects of pride then as the creations of Kent or Paxton have since become, and as the like were "not to be found in other regions," no French author could have ventured to anticipate the writer who has lately probed with rude criticism or Gallic prejudice our claims to pre-eminence in landscape gardening. The description is vague; "*elegantes horti variis arboribus et herbis instructi*" might be the first rough attempts at laying out with regularity, or they might be enclosures measured and pruned with all the pedantic stiffness of the Jacobean epoch. It is still more natural to hear that the cycles of fashion in women's dress, through which we still live, were going on, and that our countrywomen were as usual rather more *outrés* than those of other nations. The

Baron of Römzital reached England at the highest point in a tide of long dresses, and to his astonishment he beheld the women "dragging behind them vast tails to their gowns, the like of which he never saw in any other region."

The old Baron of Römzital was a sort of royal guest; but though he was sent to some Claridge's of the period, he and his attendants were entertained at court in every other way with a frank and generous hospitality which has left its mark in his narrative. "In no country were they held in so great honour. For both by the king and by all his subjects, wherever they went, they were treated in the most honourable and the kindest manner." Every day, while they were in London, dinner for fifty was sent from the palace to their inn; a golden medal was given to all knights, a silver one to all the simple folk, as a remembrance of their visit; and on one occasion, a great party and ball—over which Tetzel expatiates lingeringly—were given to them in the palace. Edward IV. is himself described as a "handsome straight-limbed man," with, by the way, "the very handsomest household that man can find in Christendom."

But kind and hospitable as the English were, and favourably as they impressed their guests upon the whole, the tongue of the observant Ssassek refused to conceal the faults which they seemed to him to possess; and an Englishman must be grieved to hear from friendly lips the familiar accusation which, as he has flattered himself, was the invention of French prejudice or malice. "They are men, as it seems to me," he says, "perfidious and astute, plotting against the lives of foreigners; men who bow the knee before you, but in whom you place no faith." Unluckily Ssassek is not the only stranger who has spoken in old times of the same quality; and there may be too much reason to fear that we ought to bow our heads in contrition, to acknowledge that we were once even as we are not now, and that the French have been guilty, not of slander, but of the minor crime of failing to discover that we learned to amend our national character.

London even in those days was great among the cities of Europe, and its wealth, its commerce, and its magnitude might well impress a Bohemian then as they impress a Russian now. "It is a large and magnificent city," says Ssassek. "Nowhere have I seen such a number of kites as there; to kill them is a capital offence. There are in its churches twenty gilded sepulchres adorned with precious stones; and in the whole kingdom there are not less than eighty; for England is very rich in gold and silver. In London there is a great multitude of goldsmiths; hardly anywhere have I seen so many. For, not counting journeymen, there are 400 master workers; and yet so great is the size and wealth of the city that none of them are ever idle." And Tetzel, in his vigorous way, calls it "A mighty and a handsome city; and one finds great trade there from all lands. In the city are very many people and many handworkers, chiefly goldsmiths and clothweavers, and very beautiful women's ornaments," the ornaments being to Tetzel's Nuremberg mind more important than their wearers;

whom however his more chivalrous companion notices in that admiring spirit which we are wont to think exceptionally well deserved by our wives and sisters. England "though not large is densely peopled, and is fruitful of women and virgins excellent in form, as we saw when our lord dined with the king."

The Lord of Rözmital, his visit to London finished, was escorted with all due honour to the coast at Poole, embarked on board a king's ship, and sailed to St. Malo. The history of his journey through Brittany is a mere itinerary. The gardens, the orchards, the meadows of the country, and the relics of Saumur, are noticed, but drily and without enthusiasm. Nor do the two travellers expatiate upon the court of René of Anjou in the manner that might have been expected. We learn little but that the king was "a hearty old handsome man," which we knew before, and the newer facts that he gathered the good round sum of 40,000 crowns yearly in tolls from his bridge at Saumur, and that he had a leopard, some lions, and some "Saracenic goats" in his Castle of Angers. When we pass into France description is still dull and meagre. Louis XI. had not the art or the will to loose with feasts and hospitable ways the tongues of frank and large-feeding northerners. The realm is said to be large, the country "abundant in everything, if any Christian kingdom be abundant;" but this grudging notice would embrace nearly all we are told of it, had not Tetzal left a close if somewhat malicious portrait of Louis himself. "Item, the king is not a tall man; he has black hair, a brownish skin, the eyes stand deep in his head; he has a long nose and little legs. And they say he hates the Germans. And his greatest fondness is for venerary, and he likes being in small towns, and goes seldom to the large ones, and sixty guards always lie fully armed before his door;" a description which might have been put by Andersen into the mouth of a child in sketching some fabled tyrant.

From the banks of the Loire the Baron of Blatnie travelled southwards to Spain, and at his entry into that country met with the only serious adventure in which he was personally involved. His semi-regal character had not the same effect on the contemptuous Spaniards as upon other people, and his followers were exposed to constant insults and not infrequent dangers. The first moment in which they touched the soil of Spain threatened to put a term to the wanderings of the whole party at once. They found the frontier custom-house fortified and jealously held by a body of troops, whose business it was first to reap their own unlicensed gains, secondly to exact the heavy dues with which Spain then, as later, endeavoured to destroy her commerce. "As import dues had never in any place been demanded from them before," the servants "who went forward with the baggage refused payment, when the officers immediately seized the goods, and the soldiers rushed from the tower to kill the owners." The insulted train of the Baron of Rözmital closed in to the rescue, and a pretty fight was on the point of beginning, when the Baron himself rode up, paid the dues, and

got off, fortunately thinks Ssassek, for the Spaniards "only wanted the excuse of one of them being wounded to have killed the party and appropriated the baggage." Exactly two centuries afterwards another distinguished traveller, M. Aarssens van Somelsdyk, underwent a similar experience; but lapse of time, even in unchanging Spain, had somewhat improved the manners of the country. The Royal authority, however incurious as to the fate of common voyagers, was prompt and severe in avenging an insult offered to persons of quality. M. van Somelsdyk had the satisfaction of burying a corregidor, to say nothing of mere custom-house officers, in the sombre depths of perpetual prison. The Lord of Rüzmital thought it useless even to complain, and it is not wonderful if the impressions of travellers accustomed to respect, who found themselves attacked on their entrance, insulted commonly by the people, and treated inhospitably by the king, should be not altogether favourable to the Spain which gave them such a reception. Accordingly a certain acrimony pervades the narrative of both Ssassek and Tetzal. Still, there is an obvious effort to be fair, and the descriptions are so inherently probable that their truthfulness may certainly be assumed to be also more probable than not. The question as to whether travellers in this instance are or are not to be depended upon, especially as regards the aspect of the country and the importance of the towns, is of peculiar interest, because of the light which would be thrown by their observations upon a matter of great importance in an historical point of view.

It is commonly believed that the material prosperity of Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella was very great, and that the country made a start during the short period of their reign which would have carried it forward to a first rank in Europe but for the insane commercial legislation of the sixteenth century. The alleged prosperity is so considerable that it can only be accounted for by supposing that there had been a considerable basis of accumulated wealth and of industrial habits to begin upon; and accordingly the Spaniards delight to point to the many thousand looms on which the artisans of Seville were employed, to the Spanish agencies at Bruges, to the active commerce of Burgos, to the luxury of the nobles and the townsmen of the fifteenth century. On the other hand, there can be no question as to the disorders which tore the country throughout the fourteenth century, and to a still greater degree during more than seventy years of the fifteenth century. The great families of Guzman and Ponce de Leon could wage permanent war in Andalusia, could fight pitched battles at sea, and burn in another encounter 800 houses in Seville. Robber nobles could levy black mail from the chief cities of the kingdom, from Burgos, from Salamanca, from Segovia, from Valladolid; they could carry off husbandman and burgher and sell them to the Moors, unpunished unless some confederacy of townsmen were powerful enough to attack them in their castles. Famines succeeded to plagues which carried off the hands needed to till the soil; and plagues succeeded to the famines which had weakened the strength of the people. These,

and such things as these, cannot be denied. But it is tacitly assumed that the aparchy and desolation of that period were of too short duration to effect more than a delay of progress—perhaps even that in some strange way wealth and ease increased side by side with misery and unquiet.

There is plenty of reason to doubt the existence of such prosperity as is alleged both as to the fourteenth century, and as to the epoch of Ferdinand and Isabella. But in face of a question such as that which has been indicated, the observations of contemporary travellers have an unusual value; and those of Ssassek and Tetzel show little evidence of riches having met their eyes, and much evidence that the country had either never been fertile at all, or had long remained untilled. Ssassek met with apples and vines in Biscay, as one does still; and afterwards, near Villafuente, on the Duoro, there was again an oasis of cultivated country rich with vineyards. But nowhere else does he mention cultivation; and again and again he expatiates on the great wastes of barren land through which he passed. From the frontiers of Biscay to Burgos, to Lerma and Rojas, again on the borders of Aragon, and round Saragossa and Osera, his eye was met by monotonous stretches covered with box, with juniper, with salvia, with rosemary, and with wormwood, sure signs of an ungrateful soil from which cultivation had long departed, had it ever been there. Once only, between Villafuente and Segovia, did he cross forests of size enough to be worthy of remark; and near Medina del Campo the land was so destitute even of brushwood that the party were again reduced to burn dung for fuel. Tetzel is more emphatic. From the moment of leaving France "we rode through a poor country called Biscay, inhabited by evil and murderous folk. In that land," the high road of the northern commerce, be it remembered, "a man must not be without horses, nor hay, nor straw of his own—nor stable in truth, so bad are the wretched inns. They carry wine in goat-skins, and one finds not good bread, nor flesh, nor fish in the land, for the people themselves for the most part live on fruits." And he ultimately sums up the conditions of Spanish travel in words which certainly show that even in Spain no retrogression in the direction of roughness and defective commissariat arrangements has taken place in the last four centuries. "Also as we went on riding many a day we came to market towns and villages, and men refused to harbour us, and we had to lie in the field under the open heaven. Did we wish to buy drink or bread, or anything else, if we paid our money beforehand they would give us wine which had been brought over the hills on mules in goat-skins and was hot as a warm bath. Did we wish bread, they would give us meal by the pound; then we got water and made a cake and baked it on hot ashes. Did we wish to have something for our horses to eat, we had to go forth and cut it ourselves, and bring it in; and we also had to buy millet very dear. Did we wish to have meat for ourselves, we found nothing but goat, which we had to flay, and we had to buy whatever it was to be cooked in. In other lands, I think, the very gipsies are treated more as gentlemen than were we in Spain. One finds but seldom hang, eggs, milk, cheese,

or grease; and as they have no cows, they seldom eat flesh, and eat, in truth, nothing but fruit." Perhaps Tetzels may have been hypercritical in complaining that his wine was not cool enough, but the general notion which he conveys of the fitness of the country for the passage of travellers, and the picture which he draws of the state of the food-market, suggests a comparison not altogether flattering between the haughty realm of Castile and the dominions of Theodore. In Olmedo, though the king was present in the town, no less than three attacks were made by the mob upon the inn where the Germans lodged; and in Barcelona they were warned never to go out unless three were together and fully armed, lest they should be kidnapped by the townspeople and sold for slaves to the Saracens. Of the Catalans, as a whole, Sassek summarily disposes with the trenchant verdict, "I know not that I have anything else to say of this province, except that it produces the most ruffianly and perfidious of mortals. I have passed through three provinces, inhabited by infidels, by barbarians, Saracens, Grenadans, and we were much safer amongst them than amongst the Catalans." If not as vigorous, this passage is at least as abusive as a sentence from Ford.

The cities of Spain only slightly arrest the attention of the travellers, except Burgos, which is called "large and elegant," and of which the cathedral meets with due praise; and Madrid, in those days "a small town lying on a hill." Barcelona alone seemed to them worthy of notice. That, it is true, was "large and handsome; its streets were clean, and all were paved with stone, so that the feet did not get muddy." But the bare statement of largeness, even when cleanliness is thrown into the scale, is hardly enough to make us believe that Barcelona was the equal of Milan or Florence, and Spanish vanity would scarcely be satisfied with less. Salisbury can share with it the predicate "*ampla*," and Avignon, "*amplitudine et pulchritudine eximia*," must be held, though confined within the walls which still exist, to have excelled it in population and magnificence.

From Spain the Baron of Rösmital went on to visit the King of Portugal, to whom he had a letter from his sister, the Empress of Germany. The two chroniclers give a very different account of this part of the voyage. Tetzels says but little about either country or people, and by what he does say would leave the impression that Portugal must have been worse than Spain; in fact, by far the most backward district in Europe. "It is an utterly poor and uncivilized land and people. One finds nothing to eat or drink for man or beast. Men make no roads in the land. There pass often four or five years without any traveller coming through the land, and people build in holes of the mountains under the earth." Sassek, on the other hand, tired of the barren wastes of Castile, revels in the chestnut woods, in the patches of corn, in the vines along the hills, in the pomegranates, the oranges, the lemons, in the great forests of oak. * He cannot enlarge upon the grandeur or the richness of the towns; but he is delighted with the hospitality of the court, and gives a long account of the stay of his master there, the honours which were heaped upon him, and

the cordial friendliness in which he at last parted with the king. Incidentally, in describing the final interview and the presents which were given to the baron, he glides into some gossip about negroes, from which we may learn something more than we knew before of the early history of slavery. Although the first negroes imported into the Peninsula are said to have been brought home by Antonio Gonçalves, in 1442, the trade seems to have so much developed in the few years which had since elapsed, that no less than a hundred thousand were then supposed to be living in Portugal. Estimates of number in that age are never trustworthy; but that the blacks, whatever their actual total, must have been numerous, is evident, if it be true that the town of Evora was almost peopled by negroes and Saracens in equal proportions—8000 of each it is said—and from the fact that the former had already been seen, though rarely, in Germany. And, in speaking of Lisbon, Ssassek says, "There are many infidels in that city, who are sold by the Christians, for every year many thousands of them are brought thither as captives, and are bought and sold in the place,"—"from whose sale the king derives more profit than from the other revenues of his whole kingdom." "A negro boy costs twelve or thirteen dollars, a full-grown man much more." It might already have been said of negro slaves, as Bodin wrote a hundred years later, that the King of Portugal "*en tient des haraz comme des bestes.*"

The return journey was through Spain; then Languedoc, which is described as "a province, rich, and sown with frequent cities and castles;" to Avignon, of which he not only celebrates the greatness in the general terms already quoted, but notices more specially for the perfect construction of its walls, for the magnificence of the Papal palace, and the fineness of the bridge over the Rhone. Thence the baron passed by Embrun, where the size of the mountains excited wonder unmingled, as was the fashion of the time, with any admiration, to Turin by the Mont Genève which as the newness of the Alps had already worn off is dismissed unnoticed even by name. We are reduced to guess, from the resting places mentioned before and after, at what point the chain was passed. In the fruitful plain of the Po, however, the tongue of Ssassek is loosed once more. Drunk with the richness of the land, he bursts into a strain of what for him is eloquence. He tells of the vines trained from tree to tree, of the grain ripening beneath, of wine and apples and corn yielding their crops together from the same earth; he declares that all the "land is fruitful, all the cities beautiful;" and he points out "the frequent castles"—for fortification was a necessary element then in a truly peaceful landscape—"and the innumerable farms, for the most part walled and capable of defence." As the travellers neared Milan, they waited for a couple of days till they should receive an answer to a message which was sent on to announce their arrival to the Duke. The place which they chose to rest in had a name unheard of for long afterwards, now well known enough—Magenta; at that time it seems to have been a town of some size, the capital of a district. On the return of the answer from Milan, in

charge of ducal heralds, they broke up for Magenta, were met outside the city by the brother of the Duke, conducted by him to an inn which they found already occupied by cooks and musicians, and settled down for a while to admire the town, so great that "it deserves to be placed amongst the greatest of Christian cities;" and the women, "than whom" Ssassek "has seen hardly any more lovely in any region" through which he travelled. Milan was the last place of consequence in which he stayed, except Venice, as to which he is unaccountably silent; and gradually as he gets into Germany, he elapses into the dry curtness of expression with which he begins the story of his journey. What became of the Lord of Rözmital we are left for the most part to imagine; that he was attacked by that disease of restlessness which afflicts everyone who has travelled may be concluded from a few fragments of an itinerary of the Holy Land appended to the narrative of Ssassek; but whether his opinion that the Catalans were the most scoundrelly of mortals was confirmed, or modified, by further communication with Mohammedans, and what were the impressions which his followers brought back from the East, no one has said for our profit or amusement.

The shadowy centre of the train of forty gentlemen never emerges again into the qualified prominence which he had as the lay figure upon which Tetzal and Ssassek hung their robes of description; and if the fancy chooses to follow him into after life the great Baron of Rözmital may, perhaps, most appropriately be pictured as a stately nonentity at the Council Board of Bohemia, enforcing little-listened-to advice by reference to his experience of all the kingdoms of Christendom, and leaving his estates to be testily administered by the mercantile instincts of his Nuremberg vassals.

L'Inferno of Dante, CANTO I.



THE following version of the first canto of the great Italian mediæval poem of Dante is given as a specimen of what I conceive should be the form adopted for a complete version of the whole, if undertaken by one desirous of presenting in our own language, not merely a translation preserving accurately the sense, but a faithful echo (so far as is consistent with the resources of our language) of the sound of the original; a condition which I cannot help regarding as a very important element in metrical translation. I hope I shall not be held too presumptuous in considering the latter requisite as unduly disregarded in the two best translations of the whole poem with which I am acquainted—those of Carey and Professor Longfellow. Both are excellent in point of careful rendering, and, as regards harmony and fluency of versification, unimpeachable. But the blank verse in which both are embodied, though it has the advantage of offering every facility for a faithful reproduction of the sense of the original, fails altogether (and as a matter of course, and of deliberate choice) in conveying to the reader's mind that perception of delicate interlacing which the *terza rima* of Dante interfuses among the rich and noble effects of his general design and colouring; as if in some gorgeous piece of tapestry representing some heroic action, the artist should impose on himself (and successfully carry out) the condition of executing each stitch in some curious and intricate chain-work. The version of Professor Longfellow, it is true, by grouping the lines into triplets, makes some attempt to convey, at least to the eye of the reader, the notion of a triple combination in the abstract. But the peculiar and highly artificial intertwining of Dante's triplets is no otherwise to be conveyed than by his own mechanism—that is, by the adoption of a triple system of rhymed terminations, overlapping each other like the slates on a roof, each one projecting beyond the other by only one-third of its length. To imitate this structure consistently with the other conditions requisite for a successful translation is by no means easy in our language, which is far from being so abundant in homophonous terminations as

to afford a copious choice for the expression of a perfectly definite sense within a definite compass of words; and it would be simply impossible, if to this condition were superadded that which in the Italian creates no difficulty, viz., that all the rhymes shall be dissyllabic. This, accordingly, is not attempted in the version which is here submitted; submitted, in the hope that some one more competent to the task may be induced by it to give us the entire of this extraordinary poem on the same plan.

TOWARD the middle of life's onward way
 I came upon a forest dark and drear,
 Out of the path direct and far astray.
 Oh! dire it were to tell, and dread to hear
 The roughness of that savage wilderness,
 Whose very thought still makes me shrink with fear.
 Death's self hath hardly more of bitterness.
 Yet, since among its mis'ries good befel,
 Th' eventful story may I not suppress.
 How first I entered there I cannot tell;
 Such drowsy torpor o'er my senses stole
 That from the rightful road my footsteps fell.
 But when I reached at length a craggy knoll
 Which closed the valley desolate and lone,
 That struck such terror to my fainting soul,
 I raised my eyes, and saw its airy cone
 Gleaming already with that Planet's ray
 Which leads through ev'ry path the wand'rer on.
 That sight chased somewhat of the fear away,
 Whose deadly weight oppressed my heart so sore
 That long, long night, I passed in such dismay.
 And as some wretch wave-tossed upon the shore,
 Breathless and faint out-struggling, turns him round
 And scans the perilous ocean's wild uproar,
 E'en so my soul, still dizzy and astound
 Turned, and that dismal tract in thought retraced
 (For none with life recross its fatal bound).
 Resting awhile, till, with fresh vigour braced
 I rose; and up that desolate hill-side
 —The lower foot behind more firmly placed—
 Toiled on; when lo! just on the rise I spied

A panther, lithe, and framed for supple grace,
 Clothed in the glories of a speckled hide,
 Who turned him not, nor fled before my face :
 Nay, seemed so fiercely bent to bar my way
 I paused, and oft would fain my steps retrace.

'Twas morning's prime ; and now the sun, with ray
 All-cheering, 'gan to mount : and with him rose
 Those stars, his bright companions in that day
 When Love Divine from which Creation flows
 Bade all these glorious works its pow'r declare.

And now some hope within my bosom grows
 Inspir'd by that gay creature's glossy hair,
 The dawn of morning, and the season sweet :
 But not to last ! Full soon 'twas changed to fear
 At what came next. A lion seemed to meet
 My startled gaze. Upon me full, with head

Upraised, he came, in rav'ning hunger's heat,
 So that the very air seemed filled with dread :
 And by his side a she-wolf, gaunt and lean,
 With ev'ry form of want discomforted,
 Who long to many a realm a scourge had been.
 So dire she seemed, such terror to my soul

Shot, darting from her eye so fierce and keen,
 I lost all hope to reach the wished-for goal :
 And as to one who wealth hath gained by toil
 The time arrives when he must lose the whole,
 Which in his heart breeds anguish and turmoil :—
 So felt I, while that beast, no peace who knows,
 Little by little forced me to recoil,

Sore press'd, to where the sun in silence goes.
 To lower ground thus driv'n by such constraint,
 Before my eyes the form of One arose
 Whose voice by long disuse of speech was faint.
 Him in that waste no sooner did I see

Than " Oh ! have pity ! " (thus I made my plaint :) .
 " If not a shade, but living man thou be,"
 " Man once I was," he said, " though such no more.
 My parents both were born in Lombardy,

Both them and me the soil of Mantua bore
Years before Julius fell. My home I made

In Rome, when mild Augustus ruled of yore,
While men to false and lying demons prayed.
A poet I : and sang in deathless lore

That pious chief who, when in ashes laid
Proud Iliou sank, his sire Anchises bore.
But thou ? Why seek those scenes of former pain ?

Why shrink'st thou that delightful mount t' explore
The source of bliss, where joys eternal reign ? "

" And art thou then that Virgil, that full spring
From whence of poetry so rich a vein

Hath welled ? " Deep awe my brow o'ershadowing
Thus spake I : " Of all bards the pride and light !

May the long study and deep love I bring
To all thy works avail me in thy sight,
Sought out and pondered with a zeal so warm.

My master thou—my pattern—my delight !
From thee alone have I imbibed that charm
Of style which glory round my name hath poured.

See'st thou yon beast, the cause of my alarm,
Illustrious sage ? Oh ! now thine aid afford
To save me ; for she makes each pulse and vein
To throb."—" Some other way must be explored,"

He said, while tears, unable to refrain,
I shed, " if thou desire to quit this place ;

For by that beast the path beset, in vain
Might any living thing attempt to pass.

Obstruction, e'en to death, would she oppose :
So fierce her nature is—so fell, so base.

And still her appetite by feeding grows,
Nor e'er was satisfied her craving will.

In wedlock no restraint of kind she knows
To many joined—and shall do more ; until
A dog shall come, to end her life in pain.

No thirst for gold or land His breast shall fill
But Wisdom's love, and Virtue's. His domain
One Feltro from the other shall divide.

Through him in peace shall rest Italia's plain,
That land for which the chaste Camilla died,

Nisus, Euryalus, Turnus, met their death.

By him through ev'ry city far and wide

Chased, she shall seek her native hell beneath
From whence she rose, by hate and envy freed.

Wherefore, methinks, thee more advantage

To follow in the path where I shall lead

And through th' eternal space thy progress guide

To realms whence ever hopeless shrieks proceed ;

Where spirits of old their punishment abide

So that each longs a second death to die.

Those, too, content, if thereby purified,

Awhile in fire to dwell, until on high

Their time at length expired, they join the blest.

But, would'st thou mount to that bright seat of joy,

Choose thou some worthier spirit for such quest,

With whom I then must leave thee ; for this cause,

That He, whose sov'reign will none dares contest,

Forbids that I, rebellious as I was,

Up to His city any soul should lead.

Supreme throughout, *there* He declares His laws ;

There is His citadel, His lofty seat.

O, happy whom He chooseth there to go ! "

Then thus I answered, " Poet, I entreat

And pray thee, by that God thou didst not know,

(So that I may avoid such bitter fate)

There, where thou speak'st of, thou the way would'st show,

And give me to behold St. Peter's gate,

And those who suffer such extreme of woe."

Then moved he on. His steps I followed straight.

J. F. W. HERSCHEL.

Earthquakes.

It is related in the *Timæus* of Plato that the ancient Egyptians held the world to be liable to occasional widely extended catastrophes, by which the gods checked the evil propensities of men, and cleansed the earth from guilt. Conflagrations, deluges, and earthquakes were the instruments of the wrath of the offended gods. After each catastrophe mankind were innocent and happy, but from this state of virtue they gradually fell away until their accumulated offences called for new judgments. Then the gods took council together, and, unable to bear with the multiplied iniquities of the human race, swept them from the earth in some great cataclysm, or sent a devouring flame to consume them, or shook the solid earth until hills and mountains fell upon and crushed the inhabitants of the whole world.

One can understand how the confused records of great catastrophes, in which all, or nearly all, the inhabitants of wide districts were destroyed, should in the course of time lead to the formation of such views as Plato has described. And, indeed, it is not in one nation alone that we find theories of this sort prevalent. In the *Institutes of Menu* the Hindoos are taught that at the end of each of those cycles of ages which are termed the "days of Brahma," all forms of life are destroyed from the earth by a great conflagration, followed by a deluge which inundates heaven itself. The mythical legends of the Chinese refer to similar views, which appear also in the Babylonian and Persian cosmogonies. The Chaldeans taught that when the planets are all conjoined in Capricorn the earth will be overwhelmed by a flood, and that when a conjunction of this sort takes place in Cancer the earth will be destroyed by fire.

In the present age, when the network of telegraphy brings all parts of the earth into close inter-communication, we are not likely to trace, even in the most wide-spread disasters, the approaching destruction of our globe. The same day which brings the intelligence of some desolating catastrophe brings evidence also that the devastation is but local. We are seldom informed of simultaneous, or nearly simultaneous, events happening in widely separated regions of the earth's surface. Accordingly, we are seldom led to dread the occurrence of any widely devastating series of catastrophes.

But certainly events have happened during the past few months which might lead nervously disposed persons to imagine that the inhabitants of the earth are not perfectly safe from wide-spread destructive agencies. The same week that brought news of the great hurricane which ravaged the West Indian Isles, brought also the account of destructive hurricanes in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Then followed the series of earthquake shocks which have inflicted such injury on the already much-tried inhabitants of St. Thomas, and which still continue to be felt at intervals. Next

we hear of an earthquake in Somersetshire, then in Malta, then in Egypt, then at Formosa, then in St. Salvador; and now, almost as we write, the bed of the Pacific is violently shaken, and hundreds of the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands are destroyed by a violent uprush of molten matter. During all this time Vesuvius continues in violent eruption.

Thus it has happened that we have heard a great deal lately of certain speculations—recently ventilated by an American philosopher—which threaten the earth with complete annihilation. According to these views there is one great danger to which we are at all times liable—the risk, namely, that some large volcanic vent should be formed beneath the bosom of ocean. Through this vent the sea would rush into the interior of the earth, and being forthwith converted into steam by the intense subterranean heat, would rend the massive shell on which we live into a thousand fragments.

Whether it is possible or not that such an event as this should take place, we shall not here stay to inquire. Let it suffice that the risk—if there be any—is no greater now than it has been any time during thousands of past years.

But, certainly, if there is any source from which the inhabitants of earth may reasonably dread the occurrence of widely devastating catastrophes, it is from earthquakes. It is related that for full six months after the great earthquake of Lisbon, Dr. Johnson refused to believe in the occurrence of so terrible a catastrophe. "He spoke half jestingly," Macaulay thought—it is not easy to see on what grounds. To us it seems far more probable that Johnson heard with natural wonder and awe of the destructive effects of this fearful convulsion; and that for awhile he could scarcely believe that the extent of the disaster had not been exaggerated. It would be well if, indeed, the powers of earthquakes were less tremendous than they have been repeatedly shown to be. "There is," says Humboldt, "no other outward manifestation of force known to us—the murderous inventions of our own race included—through which, in the brief period of a few seconds or minutes, a larger number of human beings have been destroyed than by earthquakes." Lightning and storm, war and plague, are but weak and inefficient agents of destruction in comparison with the earth's internal forces.

And as earthquakes surpass all other phenomena as agents of sudden destruction, so the impression which they produce on those who for the first time experience their effects, is peculiarly and indescribably awful. Men of reputed courage speak of a feeling of "intolerable dread" produced by the shocks of an earthquake, "even when unaccompanied by subterranean noises." The impression is not that of simple fear, but a feeling of absolute pain. The reason seems for awhile to have lost the power of separating real from imaginary causes of terror. The lower animals, also, are thrown into a state of terror and distress. "Swine and dogs," says Humboldt, "are particularly affected by the phenomenon of earthquakes." And he adds that "the very crocodiles of the Orinoco, otherwise as dumb

as our little lizards, leave the shaken bed of the stream and run bellowing into the woods."

Humboldt's explanation of the peculiar sensations of alarm and awe produced by an earthquake upon those who for the first time experience the effects of the phenomenon, is in all probability the correct one. "The impression here is not," he says, "the consequence of the recollection of destructive catastrophes presented to our imagination by narratives of historical events; what seizes us so wonderfully is the disabuse of that innate faith in the fixity of the solid and sure-set foundations of the earth. From early childhood we are habituated to the contrast between the mobile element water, and the immobility of the soil on which we stand. All the evidences of our senses have confirmed this belief. But when suddenly the ground begins to rock beneath us, the feeling of an unknown mysterious power in nature coming into operation and shaking the solid globe arises in the mind. The illusion of the whole of our earlier life is annihilated in an instant."

Use habituates the mind to the shocks of earthquake. Humboldt found himself able after awhile to give a close and philosophic scrutiny to the circumstances attending the phenomenon which had at first impressed him so startlingly. And he tells us that the inhabitants of Peru think scarcely more of a moderate shock of earthquake than is thought of a hail-storm in the temperate zone.

Yet the annals of earthquakes are sufficient to give rise to a feeling of dread, founded, not merely on the novelty of the event, but on a knowledge of the powers of the earth's internal heavings. The narratives of some of the great earthquakes afford fearful evidence on this point.

In the first shock of the great earthquake of Lisbon (November, 1755) the city was shaken to its foundations. The houses were swung to and fro so violently that the upper stories fell at once, causing a terrible loss of life. Thousands rushed to the great square in front of St. Paul's Church, to escape the reach of the tottering ruins. It was the festival of All Saints, and all the churches had been crowded with worshippers. But when the terrified inhabitants reached the square they found that the great church of St. Paul's was already in ruins, and the immense multitude which had thronged its sacred precincts were involved in its destruction. Such of the congregations of the different churches as had escaped rushed to the banks of the Tagus for safety. There were to be seen priests in their sacerdotal vestments, and an immense crowd of people of all ranks and ages, praying to Heaven for mercy. As they prayed there came the second shock, scarcely less terrible than the first. The church on the top of St. Catherine's Hill was rocked to and fro till it fell, crushing in its fall a great multitude which had sought that height for safety.

But a far more terrible catastrophe was at hand. As the banks of the river resounded with the *Miserere* of the terrified supplicants who had crowded thither for safety, there was seen to pass over the wide expanse of the stream (here four miles broad) a strange heaving swell, though no,

wind stirred the air. The waters seemed to be drawn away to meet a vast wave which was now first observed to be bearing down upon the devoted crowd. They strove to fly but the wave swept too rapidly onwards. The whole multitude was overwhelmed in a moment. A magnificent quay lately built at a great expense, was engulfed with all who had crowded on it for refuge. Numberless vessels, also, which were anchored on the river and were now full of terrified people—seeking on an unstable element the security which the solid earth denied them—were sucked down by the tremendous wave and not a trace of them was ever afterwards seen.

A third shock followed, and again the river was swept by a gigantic wave. So violently was the river moved that vessels which had been riding at anchor in deep water were flung upon the dry ground. Other shocks and other inroads of the river-water followed, each working fresh destruction, insomuch that many began to believe that "the city of Lisbon was doomed to be entirely swept from the face of the earth."

It would be out of place to describe here at length how fire and pestilence came successively to complete the desolation begun by the earthquake's ravages. The terrible story has been narrated elsewhere. But what remains to be mentioned gives us startling evidence of the terrible energy of the earth's subterranean forces :—

The mountains Arrabida, Estrella, Julio, Marvan, and Cintra, some of the largest in Portugal, were shaken from their very foundations, they opened at their summits, and huge masses were flung into the neighbouring valleys. Flames and smoke were emitted from the openings. But much farther away the effects of the great convulsion were experienced. It has been computed, says Humboldt, that a portion of the earth's surface four times greater than the whole extent of Europe was simultaneously shaken. On the coasts of Sweden and on the shores of the Baltic, far away across the Atlantic to the Antigua Islands, at Barbadoes and Martinique, and, still further off, in the great Canadian Lakes, the movement was sensibly felt. A vast wave of inky blackness swept over the West Indian seas, rising twenty feet above the level of the highest tides. In Algeria the earth was as violently shaken as in Portugal, and eight leagues from Morocco a village with 8,000 inhabitants was swallowed up.

The shocks felt at sea were so violent that captains who experienced them thought their ships had struck the solid ground. A ship 120 miles to the west of St. Vincent was so violently shaken that the men were thrown half a yard perpendicularly upwards from the deck. Lakes and rivers in England were strangely agitated. The water in Loch Lomond suddenly rose against the banks without apparent cause, and then ~~as~~ suddenly subsided—the vibration of the earth's surface having travelled from Lisbon to Scotland at the rate of twenty miles a minute !

It has been calculated that in Lisbon alone 60,000 persons perished within the brief space of six minutes. But there have been other earthquakes in which even this terrible destruction of life has been surpassed. In 1693, 100,000 persons fell victims to the great Sicilian earthquake, and

upwards of 800,000 persons are supposed to have perished in the great earthquakes which desolated Antioch in the sixth and seventh centuries. It has been estimated that within the last 4,000 years five or six millions of human beings have perished through the effects of earthquakes.

It is related that in the great earthquake of 1747 all the inhabitants of the town of Callao were destroyed, save one. The man who escaped, standing on a fort which overlooked the harbour, saw the sea retire to a distance and then return like a vast mountain in height. "He heard a cry of *Miserere* rise from all parts of the city," and in a moment all was silent—where the town had once flourished there was a wide sea. But the same wave which overwhelmed the town drove past him a small boat, into which he flung himself, and so was saved.*

No earthquake has ever happened, the circumstances attending which have been so carefully noted as was the case with the earthquake of Calabria in 1788. This celebrated earthquake began in February, 1786, and lasted until the end of 1786. The first shock threw down, "in two minutes, nearly every house in all the cities, towns, and villages, from the western flanks of the Apennines in Calabria Ultra to Messina in Sicily, and convulsed the whole country." The second took place seven weeks later, and was scarcely less violent. Sir Charles Lyell mentions that "the great granite chain which passes through Calabria from north to south and attains the height of many thousand feet, was shaken but slightly by the first shock, but rudely by those which followed."

The manner in which a large extent of country was permanently affected by this earthquake is very well worth noticing, as affording an excellent illustration of the mode in which earth-waves travel.

The Apennines are formed for the most part of massive and hard granite, with steep inclines, upon the base of which lie those strata of sand and clay which form the Calabrian plains. These plains are usually level, but are intersected in places by narrow valleys and ravines whose sides are almost vertical. The effect of the earthquake was to *shake down* those parts of the Calabrian plains which border on the granite backbone forming the Apennine range. The soil "slid over the solid and inclined nucleus, and descended somewhat lower," says Lyell, "leaving almost uninterruptedly from St. George to beyond St. Christina—a distance of from nine to ten miles—a chasm between the solid granite nucleus and the sandy soil. Many lands slipping thus were carried to a considerable distance from their former position, so as entirely to cover others; and disputes arose as to whom the property which had thus shifted its place should belong."

The whole of the country over which the effects of the great shocks extended was at times heaved simultaneously, like an angry sea, and

* It must be remarked, however, that Sir Charles Lyell estimates the number of the saved at 200, "of whom twenty-two were saved on a small fragment of the fort of Vera Cruz, which remained as the only memorial of the town after this dreadful inundation."

sensations resembling sea-sickness were experienced by many of the inhabitants. Those who have watched the sky from the deck of a sea-tossed ship, will have noticed that the drifting clouds seem at times to be arrested in their motion : it is in reality the ship which is moving for the moment in the same direction as the clouds, and thus neutralizes the effects of their motion. The same phenomenon was observed during the Calabrian earthquake ; and nothing serves to give us a stronger impression of the turbulence of those internal heavings which made the dry land as unstable as the billows of a swelling sea. Trees whose roots continued firmly imbedded in the soil were seen to lash the ground with their branches.

It will be evident that the seat of disturbance was beneath the rocky ribs of the Apennines. The superincumbent soil was swayed with violence by the vibrating mountain-slopes. But the chief mischief followed when the vibration ceased. For then the soil to which motion had been communicated began to slide over the now stationary granite, and this sliding motion being quickly checked by the irregularities of the rocky substratum, there resulted a destructive shock to all objects—houses, trees, or living creatures—upon the shaken plains. One may illustrate the nature of the shock as follows :—Suppose a small table-cloth to be lying on a large table with raised edges, and that a variety of objects stand upon the cloth. Then, if the table be shaken with a gradually increasing violence, these objects may continue in safety, provided the motion is so managed that there is no abrupt change of direction, and no sudden increase or diminution of velocity. If the motion of the table be suddenly checked, the cloth would not immediately lose its motion, but would slide till it was stopped by the raised edge of the table ; and objects on the cloth would move with it, until its motion was checked, when they would receive a shock more likely to be destructive than any which had been communicated to them while the motion of the table continued. And just as such a cloth would “ rumples up ” as soon as the motion of one end was checked, so the soil of the Calabrian plains was found to be in some parts abnormally raised, in others as strangely depressed. “ In the town of Terranuova,” says Sir Charles Lyell, “ some houses were seen uplifted above the common level, and others adjoining sunk down into the earth. In several streets the soil appeared thrust up, and abutted against the walls of houses : a large circular tower of solid masonry, part of which withstood the general destruction, was divided by a circular rent, and one side was upraised, and the foundations heaved out of the ground.”

As might be expected, the soil did not continue unbroken by the violent shocks to which it was subjected. In the central parts of the disturbed region, the earth opened so widely as to swallow up large houses. In Cannamaria many buildings were “ completely engulfed in one chasm,” inasmuch as not a trace of them was ever seen afterwards. So violently did these chasms close their yawning jaws, that afterwards, when excavations were made for the recovery of valuables, the workmen found the contents of houses crushed into a compact mass with detached portions of masonry.

In some instances persons were engulfed by one shock and thrown out again, alive, by the following one.

The magnitude of some of the fissures which were formed during this earthquake affords startling indications of the tremendous violence of the earth's internal throes. Grimaldi observed in the territory of San Fili a newly formed ravine half a mile long and twenty-five feet deep, and another of similar dimensions in Rosarno. In the district of Plaisano three enormous fissures were formed: one a quarter of a mile long, about 80 feet in width, and 225 feet deep; the second, three quarters of a mile long, 150 feet broad, and 100 feet deep; and the third, *nearly a mile long*, 105 feet broad, and 80 feet deep.

If any evidence were required as to the true nature of the disturbance, it would be found in the remarkable motions of masses slightly attached to the surface-soil. Paving-stones were flung into the air, and masses of loose soil flung in showers over the surrounding objects.

In this earthquake 40,000 persons are supposed to have perished, and about 20,000 by the epidemics which followed. Dolomieu gives a painful account of the appearance of the Calabrian cities. "When I passed over to Calabria," he writes, "and first beheld Polistena, the scene of horror almost deprived me of my faculties; my mind was filled with mingled horror and compassion; nothing had escaped; all was levelled with the dust; not a single house or piece of wall remained; on all sides were heaps of stone so destitute of form that they afforded no idea of there having ever been a town on this spot. The stench of the dead bodies still arose from the ruins. I conversed with many persons who had been buried for three, four, or even five days; I questioned them respecting their sensations in so dreadful a situation, and they agreed that, of all the physical evils they endured, thirst was the most intolerable; and that their mental agony was increased by the idea that they were abandoned by their friends, who might have rendered them assistance."

The destruction of the Prince of Scilla and a great number of his vassals, was one of the most remarkable events attending this deplorable catastrophe. He had persuaded his servants to seek their fishing-boats, for safety, and went with them to encourage them. During the night of February 5th, while they were sleeping, an enormous mass of earth was flung from Mount Jaci upon the plain near which the boats were moored. Immediately the sea rose more than twenty feet above the level of the plain. Every boat was sunk or dashed upon the beach, and hundreds of persons who had been sleeping on the plain were swept out to sea. The Prince and 1,480 of his servants perished.

One of the most remarkable earthquakes ever experienced was that which overthrew Riobamba on February 4th, 1797. A district 120 miles long and 80 broad was shaken by an undulatory motion which lasted for four minutes, and a far wider district felt the effects of the disturbance. Within the space first named, in which the movement was more energetic, every town and village was levelled to the ground; and many places were

buried under large masses flung down from the surrounding mountains. Among these was the flourishing town of Riobamba. Preceded and accompanied by no warning noises whatever the terrific concussion in a few moments effected the complete desolation of the unhappy district. The earthquake was a singular combination of perpendicular, horizontal, and rotatory vibrations. So violent was the perpendicular, or as it may be termed the explosive movement, that hundreds of the wretched inhabitants were flung upon the hill La Culla, several hundred feet high on the further side of the small river Lican. Then came a horizontal movement, so rapidly succeeding the other that in many instances the furniture of one house was found beneath the ruins of another. In some cases property was removed so far from its original place, that disputes arose among the survivors of the catastrophe, and the Audiencia, or Court of Justice, was for some time occupied in adjusting these difficulties. Not less remarkable were the effects of circular or rotatory concussions. Walls beyond the town were twisted round without being flung down; rows of trees which had been parallel were deflected in the most remarkable manner; and the direction of the ridges of fields covered with various kinds of grain was observed to be altered by the effects of the earthquake.

Humboldt, it may be mentioned, explains in a somewhat unnatural manner the peculiar effects we have spoken of above. He conceives that the fact of the furniture of one house being found under the ruins of another, seems to show that the movement was first directed downwards, then horizontally, and then upwards. This appears to us wholly improbable. In the first place it has been almost constantly observed that the upward motion (in earthquakes which exhibit perpendicular vibrations) precedes the downward; and secondly, had the downward motion taken place first, it seems most probable that neighbouring houses would have sunk *side by side*, so that the following horizontal movement would only have resulted in the forms of destruction ordinarily observed in earthquakes. The more natural view seems to be that there was first a violent upward movement, flinging the less firmly built houses bodily upwards, and merely destroying others; then immediately followed a downward movement and a horizontal one, bringing the latter class of houses beneath the falling ruins of the others. Or it may be that so violent was the first upward movement, that the upper part of all buildings were flung into the air, whence—not partaking in the horizontal movement which displaced the foundations and lower part of the houses—they fall in ruins over the *débris* of buildings they had not belonged to originally. An upward, followed by a downward, and then by a horizontal movement, might result in either form of demolition, or in both.

A short time after the destruction of Riobamba, a fearful subterranean rumbling, resembling the loudest thunder-peals, was heard under the cities of Quito and Ibarra, the former more than a hundred miles from Riobamba.

The subterranean noises heard during earthquakes are sometimes singularly striking. The nature of the noises is very various, says

Humboldt, "rolling, rattling, clanking like chains, occasionally like thunder close at hand; or it is clear and ringing, as if masses of obsidian or other vitrified matters were struck in caverns underground." These noises are not only heard much farther off than they could be if they were transmitted in the air, but they travel much more rapidly. In 1744, when the great eruption of Cotopaxi took place, subterranean noises were heard at Honda, on the Rio Maddalena. The crater of Cotopaxi, 17,000 feet above the level of Quito, is separated from it "by the colossal mountain-masses of Quito, Pasto, and Papayan, by innumerable valleys and precipices, and by an actual distance of no less than 500 geographical miles." The eruption which took place in the island of St. Vincent on the 30th of April, 1812, produced subterranean noises resembling the loudest peals of thunder in Caraccas, in the plains of Calabozo, and on the banks of the Rio Apure, a distance of upwards of 700 geographical miles. "This, in respect of distance," says Humboldt, "was as if an eruption of Mount Vesuvius were to be heard in the north of France."

But it is remarkable that subterranean rumblings and bellowings are sometimes heard when neither an earthquake nor the kindred phenomenon—a volcano—is in progress. "Sonorous phenomena," Humboldt tells us, "when accompanied by no perceptible shocks, leave a remarkably deep impression even with those who have long dwelt in districts subject to repeated earthquakes." A singular instance occurred in the year 1784, in the high lands of Mexico. A sound was heard as of heavily rumbling thunder alternating with sharp explosive bursts beneath the feet of the startled inhabitants of Guanaxato. The subterranean bellowings and thunderings (*bramidos y truenos subterranos*) grew gradually more and more intense, and then decreased as gradually. Terrified by a phenomenon which seemed to forewarn them of an approaching and terrible catastrophe, the inhabitants fled from the town, leaving great piles of silver bars a prey to bands of robbers. But after a time the more courageous returned and repossessed themselves of their treasure. For one month the subterranean rumblings were heard at intervals, though neither on the surface of the earth, nor in the silver mines 500 yards beneath it, was any movement of the earth perceptible.

Earthquakes occur in all regions adjacent to active volcanoes. Thus the neighbourhood of Vesuvius, Etna, and Teneriffe is infested by subterranean convulsions, which also are frequent over the neighbourhood of the Greek Archipelago, and in Syria. In fact, it seems probable that the whole of the Mediterranean basin and the surrounding lands for a distance of many miles from its shores form a single earthquake district, whereof Teneriffe, Vesuvius, Etna, Stromboli, the Archipelagic and the Syrian volcanoes are the safety-valves. Then there is another earthquake region surrounding Hecla, or—some say—extending in a long line from the Jan Mayen volcano, through Hecla, the Azores, and the Cape Verde Islands, to St. Helena and Tristan d'Acunha. Japan, Sumatra, Java, and the islands of the East Indian Archipelago are liable to fearful earthquakes,

of the most destructive of which have occurred within the past few years. In the West Indies there is another earthquake region, to which must be referred those which have recently taken place. Probably this district belongs to the great earthquake region in Columbia and Peru, around the celebrated volcanoes Cotopaxi and Chimborazo. The south-western districts of the United States are also liable to earthquake shocks, apparently referable to the great Mexican volcanoes. There is one region of the earth in which subterranean shocks occur which cannot be referred to the neighbourhood of volcanic vents. Upper India and parts of Western India are liable to frequent earthquakes, insomuch that between the years 1800 and 1842 no less than 162 earthquakes were recorded in these places. Undoubtedly we may trace these disturbances to the great mountain chains which traverse this part of Asia. The subterranean forces which upheaved the great Himalayan range, for instance, may be assumed to be still existent, though now for awhile dormant, or "perhaps," says Sir John Herschel, "expended in maintaining the Himalayas at their present elevation."

On the other hand there are some regions wholly free from earthquake shocks. Among such may be mentioned the great alluvial plains of America east of the Andes, the plains on the north-east of Europe; and the northern parts of Asia. There are monuments, natural and artificial, which prove the absolute fixity of some regions. The slightest shock would have flung down that strange mass which is perched upon the summit of the Peter Botte mountain, 1,500 feet above the sea-level. Pompey's Pillar justifies the assertion of Strabo that Egypt has long been free from earthquakes; though nothing short of subterranean convulsion could have flung down the more ancient obelisks which lie prostrate amidst the sands of Western Lower Egypt. Even that masterpiece of Egyptian labour, the Great Pyramid, though surpassing all other human erections in stability, shows unmistakable evidence of the slow action of subterranean forces.* In Mexico, again, in the very centre seemingly, of earth-rocking forces, there is a region in which rocks of grotesque figure attest the perfect immunity which the region has enjoyed even from inconsiderable shocks. The Cheese-ring in Devonshire is another instance of the kind of evidence we are considering.

And as there are instances of regions near to a disturbed district, which yet are free from shocks, so there are spots liable to frequent shocks though the neighbouring country for miles on every side is seldom (if ever) disturbed. Such is the district—very limited in extent—near Comrie, in Perth, where a year scarcely ever passes without a shock being experienced.

It would seem also as if regions free from subterranean disturbance for many centuries must not count upon permanent immunity. For a violent earthquake will often open out, as it were, a passage for subterranean

* "The quantity of the post-pyramid tilt," says Professor Piazzi Smyth, "appears to be about thirty-seven seconds," as given by the corner angles of the Great Pyramid.

impulses to new regions. "The circles of concussion enlarge," says Humboldt, "in consequence of a single extremely violent shock." Since Cumana was destroyed (December 14, 1797) every shock of the southern coast is felt in the peninsula of Maniguarez, which before suffered no disturbance. : Again, in the successive earthquakes which traversed (in 1811-18) the valley of the Mississippi, Arkansas and Ohio rivers, it was noteworthy how the motion travelled farther and farther northward on each occasion. It seemed as if the subterranean forces were gradually breaking a way through successive barriers.

We have seen so much of the earthquake as an agent of destruction, that it may sound paradoxical to assert that the phenomenon is surpassed by no other as a regenerative and restorative agent. Yet this is strictly the case. But for earthquakes our continents would continually—however slowly—diminish in extent through the action of the sea-waves upon their borders, and of rain and rivers on their interior surfaces. "Had the primeval world been constructed as it now exists," says Sir John Herschel, "time enough has elapsed, and force enough, directed to that end, has been in activity, to have long ago destroyed every vestige of land." It is to the reproductive energy of the earth's internal forces that we are alone indebted for the very existence of dry land. To the same cause, undoubtedly, we owe that gradual process of change in the configuration of continents and oceans, which has been for ages and still is in progress—a process the benefit derived from which cannot possibly be called in question. Our forests and our fields derive their nourishment from soils prepared for long ages beneath the waves of ocean; our stores of coal and of many other important minerals have been in like manner prepared for our use during the long intervals of their submergence; we build our houses, even, with materials, many of which owe their perfect adaptation to our wants, to the manner in which they have been slowly deposited on what was once the bed of ocean, and compressed to a due solidity and firmness of texture beneath its depths. If it is indeed true, as Humboldt asserts, that "the destiny of man is in part dependant on the fashion of the outer crust of the globe, on the partitioning of continents, on the direction of the mountain chains which traverse them, and on the distribution of land and water," then we must look upon the earthquake as the most important of all those agencies which tend to the renovation of our terrestrial globe. So far from dreading lest the earth's subterranean forces should acquire new energies, we ought rather to fear lest they should lose their force. We may, therefore, gladly hail the opinion of the great geologist, who asserts that "the energy of subterranean movements has always been uniform as regards the *whole* earth. The force of earthquakes," adds Lyell, "may for a cycle of years have been invariably confined, as it is now, to large but determinate spaces;" gradually, however, this force shifts in position so that other regions, for ages at rest, become "in their turn the grand theatre of action."

Witches and their Craft.

AN impressive chapter in the history of the middle ages is the one devoted to witchcraft. That singular creed, however, was not then for the first time introduced to the world. It had existed ages before—mixing, as yet it mixes, with every pagan superstition, and receiving patronage and proscription from every civilized community. But its palmy days were beyond comparison those of credulous Christianity. Therewith it grew and flourished—sorcery and saints rising to eminence together, and miracle and magic wading side by side—until it often became difficult to pronounce whence the marvel sprang, or whether the Thaumaturgist was the instrument of Satan or the delegate of heaven. Indeed, the very same page of the annalist that records some astounding miracle is pretty sure to recount some equally amazing piece of witchcraft. And in general these things are so like—differing merely in name—that the miracle would pass muster unquestioned as a right good feat of necromancy; and the magic figure very respectably among the choice doings of a saint. For instance—two repulsive old women, innkeepers of Rome, were accustomed to amuse themselves by turning their male visitors into asses and—selling them. The trick is still practised, with the difference that the witches are no longer ancient and ugly. But the period of transformation in the former case was usually a short one. For, as the objects always resumed their natural shape on plunging into water, they took very good care to astonish their purchasers at the earliest opportunity. This was magic. On the other hand—Natalis, an Irish saint, laid a curse on the district of Ossory, and in consequence thereof two of the unfortunate Ossorians were thenceforward condemned to figure as wolves. Every seven years, or sooner in case of accident, two fresh victims—a male and a female—were transformed, and the former pair, if they survived, resumed their places in society. And this was a miracle. Now if these stories were told without their respective headings, it would sorely perplex the keenest to distinguish between them.

If unanimity could avail to turn fancy into fact, then was witchcraft a stern reality, for everybody believed in it. Divided as Christians were in other respects, here they were singularly at one. Without it—as they reasoned—there could be no possession, and therefore no display, of that prime token of orthodoxy—the power of exorcism. Consequently, the thunders which pealed from the Vatican against magic and magicians, were re-echoed from Lambeth and Geneva. And strange to say, all sects were just as unanimous in patronizing these things. Charles IX. executed the

notorious *Trois Echelles*, and pampered the still more notorious *Cosmo Ruggeri*. Queen Elizabeth re-enacted her father's witch-laws, and consulted the choicest English adept, Doctor Dee, concerning a fortunate day for her coronation. And though Pope Innocent VIII. issued (1486) the bull which made witchcraft high treason against the church, one of his predecessors, Pius II., a few years before, referred the Duke of Saxony to the witch *Guerino el Meschino* concerning a question whose solution defied the pontifical skill; and one of his successors, Adrian VI., not many years later, employed several noted necromancers—in the first place to stop a pestilence by a series of incantations, one of which consisted in sacrificing a bull in the centre of Rome; and in the second place, to unite their skill in framing an infallible amulet for himself. But the paradox disappears when we consider how artfully magic and magi adapted themselves to human weakness, and became all things to all men, from the coarsest profligate to the sourest devotee. No matter who or what they were that believed in the art, they could always find professors to their taste. There were a *Sein* for such a hero as *Wallenstein*; a *Lilly* for the precisians of the Commonwealth; and a *Forman* for the libertines that thronged the court of the first Stuart. The high-class magus was usually one of the landmarks of his age, profound in knowledge, austere in life, and enthusiastic in all matters Scriptural. By profession a deadly enemy to Satan, his incantations were so many single combats with the infernal potentates. Armed in proof with stole and mitre, wielding wand and bible, and begirt by his impregnable circle, he provoked them to the struggle, belaboured them with words of power, and finally compelled them to yield up their treasures of knowledge. Some of the more gifted went still greater lengths, and, seizing an unfortunate imp by the tail, doubled him up small and confined him in a ring, a vial, or the pommel of a sword, in order to have his knowledge always handy, and thus avert the trouble and risk of a formal tournament on every light occasion. It is true indeed that some of these tricky gnomes assumed rather ludicrous forms after the deaths of their first owners. Thus one unquiet spirit, hermetically sealed up in a glass tube, subsided into an air globule in a spirit level; and "a certain terrible hairy devil, confined in a crystal," was found, when it came to be examined with fear and trembling by the executors of its former master, to have taken the ignoble form of a flea under a microscope. But these changes, occurring of course to baffle that profane curiosity which delights to pry into what it cannot understand, did not detract in the least from the credit of the necromancer. Indeed, down to a very recent period, he was as necessary an official in the establishment of the great as the chaplain or the physician. And very frequently, when the patron's income forbade him to entertain all three, the conjuror undertook, and was fully competent to perform, the part of priest or leech, frequently of both, in addition to his own.

But the signified masters of the art, the *Raymond Lullis* and *Pietro d'Abamos*, were comparatively few. The world at large required something very different; and, demand always producing supply, Europe was over-

spread with men who prostituted the art to the vilest uses. Not that these fellows were altogether unlettered. Many of them bore about unquestionable certificates of clerkship burnt deep into "the brawn of the thumb," or, like the noted adept Kelly, clipped upon their ears. Taking a batch of London conjurors as they appeared about the close of the sixteenth century, we find among them Captain Bubb, "a proper handsome man, and well spoken," but, like his brethren, too much given to shaping his replies by the wishes of his customers rather than the rules of astrology; Alexander Hart, page, footman, private soldier, and finally wise man, who imposed on his dupes with all the dignity of "an alderman in his gown;" Jeffrey Neve, a fraudulent bankrupt; Richard Delahay, alias Dr. Ardree, a broken-down attorney; William Poole, an incorrigible vagabond who figured as astrologer, among a hundred other equivocal characters; Dr. Evans, a drunken clergyman, compelled to fly his cure for sundry scandalous acts; and lastly, Dr. Forman, the confidant of Mrs. Turner and Lady Frances Howard. These were precisely such fellows as in our days would play the parts of welshers, quacks, or advertising rogues. In private life they alternated perpetually between lavish debauchery and such shifts as "smoking pieces of bell-rope in lieu of tobacco." And in public, besides contemplating the world from the elevation of the pillory, and being contemplated by it at the cart-tail about once in every six months, they occupied themselves in "resolving questions." Some of them were very clever concerning thieves and stolen property; and well they might be, considering their antecedents. Others were infallible on the eventualities of sickness especially, when they foretold death to expectant heirs. A third class was very popular with young gentlemen as to "favourable hours for gaming and winning money." A fourth was in still greater request in all matters relating to love, such as philtres, potions, and assignations. And a fifth employed themselves in replying to miscellaneous questions about everything that superstition, anxiety, or curiosity could suggest. And a rich harvest the last order reaped. For, to say nothing of private inducements, whatever scandal was current was sure to send thousands of idle gossips to the wizards to have their prurient longings gratified with all sorts of ugly details. Indeed, a good many of the vicious anecdotes which we encounter in the elder writers may be attributed to the invention of these resolvers of questions.

These fellows had little in common with the high-bred wizards, and just as little with the witches. They did not share the profound respect accorded to the former; but then they were exempt from the perils that always beset the latter. And these perils were enormous. Indeed, the repute of madness was not more fatal to mad dogs than that of witchcraft to human beings. So destructive was it, that there is scarcely a hamlet of ancient date west of the Carpathians wherein crowds of witches have not been massacred during the middle ages. For a considerable period Cologne burnt 400 of these wretches, Paris 800, and a multitude of second-rate towns 200 a-piece every year. To be stigmatized as a witch

was to be condemned, sooner or later, to the stake. And so well was this understood, that the mischievously inclined had only to fix that evil name on their victims in order to secure their execution. This was all the easier since the world was accustomed to set down every striking peculiarity to the credit of diablerie. And though harsh feature, bitter temper, and poverty were the most usual characteristics of the witch, still countless tales were told, and universally credited, of knowledge, wealth, and beauty acquired, and even of youth renewed, by the aid of the demon. The malignant, therefore, had merely to exhibit the characteristics of those they hated in the strongest light. And thus, surpassing attractions of mind or body, no less than matchless stupidity or awkwardness, might, and often did, bring their possessors to the scaffold. A list remains of some 150 witches slain in three years by that paltry place, Wurzburg, and among the sufferers we find half-a-dozen vagrants, children, and others; a scold, a learned judge, a skilful linguist, several popular preachers, an accomplished musician, and "Göbel Babelin, the prettiest girl in Wurzburg." And it was just the same everywhere else. Nor were personal qualities the sole cause of risk. Nothing unusual could occur without implicating the witches. The lying tale of a malicious herdboy sent a dozen people to the scaffold in Lancashire. The mischievous nonsense of a couple of schoolgirls was just as fatal in another quarter of Britain. And Cologne was kept in perpetual commotion by the absurdities of its numerous nuns, who played the possessed in half a dozen convents at a time, to the destruction of their laundresses and needlewomen, and occasionally of their confessors and superiors. Disappointed passion and jealousy, too, made havoc among the witches. And so did that peculiar form of marital tenderness which in our days finds vent in the divorce courts. A fine-looking servant-woman was put to death in Scotland at the charge of her jealous mistress, because she had so thoroughly glamourised "the puir innocent laird," her master, that he very often mistook his way among the dormitories. And in all quarters we meet with cunning rogues shifting the odium, and therefore the punishment, of their crimes from their own necks, by representing themselves as the unwilling agents of the witches. The vagaries of intoxication and somnambulism were also attributed with great success to these universal offenders; and the most absurd stories were received in evidence against them.

It was a fundamental axiom of the witch-codes, as explained by Bodin—and his explanation is adopted by James VI. and by reformed witch-hunters generally—that no witch might be acquitted "unless her innocence shone as clear as the noontide sun;" and every care was taken to render that impossible. The most infamous were accepted as witnesses, and their discrepancies and contradictions, far from invalidating their testimony, actually increased its weight. Everything of the sort was explained as alluding to a new offence, and was thus made to furnish additional matter of accusation. Torture, too, was liberally used; and it was impossible to profit by the most incontrovertible alibi, even though

attested by a thousand unimpeachable eye-witnesses. "It was a delusion," said the judge in reply, "a phantom raised by the devil that you saw and touched, and conversed with; the real party was far off,"—and thus husband after husband, who swore to the fact of their wives being fast asleep in their arms at the very time that they were charged with attending the Satanic gathering at the Blocula, the Brocken, the nut-tree of Benevento, or the sands of Seville, as the case might be, were dismissed and ordered out of court, while their unfortunate partners were retained until, by hook or by crook, their conviction was secured. And by far the most powerful means of effecting this—surpassing false witness and torture by an infinite length—was the infamous scrutiny to which the miserable creatures were subjected. The search for devil-mark and amulet, as prescribed by the church, was worse than death itself to modesty; and of the thousands who perished, a vast proportion died self-accused, preferring the deadly search of the flame to that of the monkish inquisitors, and confessing anything and everything in order to escape the latter.

But "'tis an ill wind that blows nobody good,"—and witchcraft was highly profitable to the rascality of the middle ages. It provided two employments highly remunerative and peculiarly congenial to those gentlemen of erratic temperament and slender conscience who, as Mickey Free sings,—“Hav'n't a janius for work.”

Indeed, the witchfinders and exorcists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were fully as respectable as the informers of the nineteenth; quite as well paid and nearly as popular. The former went his rounds as regularly as the judge, preceding that functionary a little as the pilot-fish goes before the shark. His advent was a matter of fear and trembling to everybody who had an enemy and no sufficient means of bribery. And he gratified other inclinations as well as avarice—anticipating, perhaps originating, the stories told of Jeffreys, Kirk, Robespierre, Callot d'Herbois, and, in short, of all the other cruel despots with which earth has, from time to time, been afflicted. But above all, he was ingenious in ferreting out evidence. On one occasion, when every other means had failed, the witchfinder disguised himself with horns, tail, and bear-skin, and descended to a dungeon in the very suitable character of the fiend, and with sublime effect. Taking him for what he appeared—no very great mistake—the prisoner, an ignorant countrywoman, knelt, worshipped, and proffered her soul in exchange for liberty. The tempter returned jubilant, and the miserable creature paid the penalty of her demon-worship in a few short hours. Most of these officials, like Hopkins, are said to have closed their careers as the victims of popular indignation. But this appears to be a poetic fiction, for there is no reliable evidence extant of any such event.

The character of the exorcist, as he appeared from Thule to Taranto, is very prettily illustrated by the following circumstance:—Scene, South Lancashire—Time, last years of Elizabeth.—Two of the children of Mr. Starkie, a gentleman of fortune in that quarter, being afflicted with fits, a neighbouring conjuror managed to persuade the father that they

were bewitched, and that himself, John Hartley, of Clayworth, was precisely the man to reverse the spell. Accordingly he was taken into pay, and for three whole years lived in clover. By that time, however, the parson appears to have wearied of his henchman, and intimated his desire that the latter should betake himself to other quarters. To this the conjuror demurred, and a quarrel arose between the pair. Now Mr. Starkie's household included no less than seven young women, and the moment a difference manifested itself between the master and his wise man, the ladies, one and all, became possessed. For six or seven weeks they kept the house in a state of bedlam, and the country round in a ferment—yelling, dancing, and tumbling in anything but a ladylike way, and at most uncomfortable seasons. They dreamed dreams, saw visions, and capered and chattered until everybody else's hair stood on end. The conjuror was clapped in prison of course, and equally of course he disclaimed all Satanic attributes the moment the key was turned upon him. But neither his imprisonment nor his protestations proved serviceable to anybody. Indeed, the ladies appeared to get worse—particularly one to whom Mr. John Hartley had promised marriage. Among the many who were appealed to in this emergency came the parish clergyman with a church bible. But the possessed treated the book and its bearer with the greatest irreverence. At last it was suggested by a popular preacher in the neighbourhood, who displayed much interest in the affair, that, though one solitary priest might not be of much avail, the united prayers of half-a-dozen might prove beneficial. Accordingly, three clergymen of the Established Church, including the adviser, a couple of Puritan preachers, and about thirty people of pious repute, were collected one morning in Mr. Starkie's largest parlour. The seven demoniacs were stretched on couches, and the party engaged in prayer wrestling with the fiend for twelve long hours. By that time six of the spirits—thoroughly worn out—took their departure, and the seventh and most obstinate was expelled before the next morning. Once or twice the fiends attempted to resume possession; but, always encountering a vigorous resistance from the aforesaid popular preacher, they soon gave up the contest. Hartley was sentenced to death at the next assizes, and was led to the gallows protesting his innocence. Strange to say, the rope broke, and before the noose was readjusted the wretched man actually retracted his plea of innocence, confessed himself a wizard, and died an humble penitent! The best comment we can offer on this story is its sequel. The clergyman who had been most prominent in exorcising, published a book concerning the case, and, in conjunction with one of the Puritan preachers, soon drove a roaring trade in casting out devils. This greatly disgusted the better class of clergymen, and one of them—the Rev. Samuel Harnett, afterwards created Bishop of Winchester—caused the matter to be investigated. The result was, that the chief of the precious exorcists was convicted of instructing the young women how to act as demoniacs, and the other of aiding and abetting. The principal impostor, Darrel,

was degraded from his office, and along with his fellow-rogue, George Moore, consigned to a long and well-merited imprisonment.

The exorcists of the Reformed Churches, however, were not to be compared with their brethren of the Roman Catholic community. But then the former were by no means so well armed—being limited to prayer and texts; while the latter, in addition to these weapons, were at liberty to use every device contained in the *Manual of Exorcism*, a bulky folio of over 1,800 pages. When an obstinate minister of darkness, therefore, refused to vacate his usurped place for scolding, the reformed exorcist was compelled to give in. Not so the rival practitioner. Following out the directions of his Manual, the latter drew a "horribly wicked picture" of the usurper with a piece of chalk on a wall, wrote the demon's name underneath, and then fumigated him with a delicate compound of brimstone, laurel leaves, salt, and assafetida; which, as the ponderous tome we have alluded to declares, will infallibly rout the most resolute imp to his native shades. We commend this receipt to political exorcists on both sides of the Atlantic, who seem sadly in want of something like it just at present.

Considering how fearfully and inevitably witches were punished, it does seem astonishing that any, much less such myriads, should have professed them of the craft. But on the other hand it must be borne in mind that the acquisition of power to inflict storm and devastation, disease and death—in short, to wield all the weapons of destruction at will—was an irresistible temptation to the savage nature that then predominated in the lower classes, but not in the lower classes only, especially as the credit of that power was fraught, for a time at least, with very substantial results. For everybody sought the fraternity. Those who suffered, or apprehended suffering, bought their services equally with those who desired to have suffering inflicted. The latter, however, were by far the more numerous, and the witches had very singular means of gratifying them. One of the strangest was to fashion an image of the hated individual during the celebration of certain infernal rites. The simulacrum was usually of virgin wax; but when it was meant to make the work of vengeance thoroughly sure, the clay taken from the depth of a well-used grave was generally preferred. The image being moulded according to rule, and baptized by a properly qualified priest, whatever injury was inflicted on the model was believed to have a similar effect on the original. Did they tie up a member of the effigy, paralysis attacked the corresponding limb of the person represented, and continued to fetter it so long as the ligature retained its place. Intense pain and fearful mutilation were thus assumed to be produced. Nor was even death itself beyond the wizard's reach. To secure this fatal result there were many approved recipes. Some pierced the heart of the statuette with a new needle; others melted it slowly before a fire; a third set it interred it at dead of night in consecrated ground with horrible burlesque of the burial service; and a fourth gathered the hair into the stomach of the model, and concealed it in the chamber—if

possible under the pillow—of the intended victim. Such images were prepared by Robert of Artois for the destruction of his principal enemies. In this way Euguerand de Marigny was said to have slain Philip the Fair. Thus, too, Eleanor Cobham, wife of Duke Humphrey, was held to have attempted the life of Henry VI., and was supposed by a good many to have enfeebled his intellect. So also certain seminary priests were accused of working against Queen Elizabeth in Lincoln's Inn. And thus one of that monarch's courtiers, Ferdinand Earl of Derby, was generally believed to have been murdered. "He died thinking himself bewitched," says our authority, "an opinion in which very many, and some of them very learned men, concurred. During his last sickness a homely wise woman was found mumbling in a corner in his chamber, but what, God knoweth. About midnight was found by Mr. Hallsall an image of wax, with hair like unto the hair of his honour's head, twisted through the belly thereof. And he fell twice into a trance, not able to move hand or foot, when he would have taken physic to do him good. In the end he cried out often against all witches and witchcraft." Of course the witches had counter-spells for this, as for every other wicked contrivance; and these were as precise, disgusting, and blasphemous too, as anything they were intended to neutralise. But the image was not always shaped to work destruction: it was accounted equally infallible in exciting love. Indeed the licentious freaks of every high-born dame that way given, were invariably set down to the credit of these contrivances, and the sinner herself was excused and pitied as the unfortunate victim of some malignant hag or unprincipled lover; a theory which was marvellously convenient to the demi-rep, but by no means so to her admirers and confidants. Leicester is said to have wrought thus on Queen Elizabeth, Bothwell on Mary Stuart, half a score of her lovers on Margaret of Navarre; a long line of Spanish favourites on a succession of Peninsular queens, &c. &c.

But the witches had countless mischievous contrivances for every possible purpose. A decoction made of a toad baptized by the name of John, and fed on consecrated wafers, was thrown under a farmer's table by a witch at Soissons, and all who sat round the board died immediately. Sand thrown into the air raised the wind; water similarly used brought down rain. So late as 1716, a Mrs. Hicks and her daughter, the latter aged nine, were hanged at Huntingdon for raising a storm by turning their stockings inside out and making a lather of soap. The hags of Lapland and their sisters of the Isle of Man were accustomed to sell seamen cords with three knots on each. When the first was untied a gentle breeze arose, a strong gale followed the opening of the second, and a furious hurricane the loosing of the third. Ruin was brought down by inscribing plates of lead with magical devices and imprecations, and burying them on the land of the person thus devoted to the furies. Two such plates were found under a heap of stones in that locality known as Richmondshire. One of them was thus inscribed:—"I do make this that James Philip, John Philip his son, Christopher Philip and Thomas Philip his sons, shall flee

Richmondshire, and nothing shall prosper with any of them in Richmondshire." And the other thus:—"I do make this that the father, James Philip, John Philip, Arthur Philip, and all the issue of them, shall come presently to utter beggary, and nothing joy or prosper with them in Richmondshire.—Signed J. PHILIP." And as the finder of the plates took the trouble to ascertain, the event designed by the wretched contriver of these plates actually followed. The same effect was supposed to be brought about by the proper disposition of scrolls similarly prepared and inscribed, and by this means Robert of Artois endeavoured to injure the Duke of Burgundy.

But the witches were not always employed in distributing ruin and murder. They varied their amusements with a little plunder; and for every act they had a settled formula. When they desired to be furnished with beer or wine, for example, they had merely to ascertain who in their vicinity was provided with these drinkables. This done, the witch stuck a knife into the wall, placed a pail underneath, cut a few capers, and muttered some gibberish. Thereupon, whatever liquid was mentioned streamed plentifully from the knife-handle until the vessel was full or the reservoir empty. And they supplied their other wants in similar fashion. It was, however, in their excursions that they chiefly delighted to display their ingenuity. In this respect they were and are altogether unrivalled. We have no locomotive contrivance that can at all compete with the broomstick in simplicity, handiness, economy, or speed; and certainly none half so picturesque. And this method of travel was excellently supplemented by the faculty of gliding through key-holes, a faculty which rendered a long purse quite unnecessary.

Nor was witch-power limited to these trifling achievements. Certain ceremonies rendered those who practised them unerring marksmen. The archer Pinchner shot three arrows against a crucifix on a Good Friday, and thereby acquired the power of discharging a trio of fatal shafts every day in the year—as the garrison of Lindenbrunnen found to their cost. This, however, though a mediæval legend, smacks something of earlier Scandinavian superstition. So also does the employment of witches by the Swedes in their war with the Danes, A.D. 1568. And still more so the conduct of that valiant captain, Ivo de Taillebois, who perched a witch on a wooden tower and endeavoured to storm the last hold of the Anglo-Saxons under cover of her curses—an incident which reads like a passage from Tasso's great poem.

And the necromancers could be sufficiently conservative when it suited their purpose, as was shown by that particular contrivance the amulet. This might consist of anything from a dried toad to a precious stone, and assume any form, but was usually preferred as a ring or a seal. One of these rings was worn by a beauty at a mediæval court, and so long as she lived it rendered her the object of the monarch's passionate attachment. Nor did the amulet lose its power when the lady died. Being buried with its owner, it drew the royal lover with resistless force to her tomb. A certain bishop suspecting the cause, secured the ring, and thus transferred

the monarch's favour to himself. But it proved so annoyingly obtrusive, that, as a matter of personal comfort, the churchman hastened to get rid of it. He deposited the ring in all manner of out-of-the-way places, and thus caused his master to perpetrate the oddest freaks, and exhibit the most grotesque likings. At length a course of penance undertaken with that object, procured the prelate a dream which revealed the means of reversing the spell. A very simple one it proved, consisting merely of burning the bones of the lady along with the survivors of the witches who had aided her in constructing the talisman. One species of amulet—the Hand of Glory—was considered useful in housebreaking; and another in securing the clerks of St. Nicholas against some of the risks attached to their profession. *Brand's Popular Antiquities* contains a very precise but rather disgusting recipe for preparing the former. The latter consisted of a piece of parchment inscribed with the names of the three kings of Cologne, and endowed with the necessary virtue by being rubbed over the skulls of these worthies. So long as it was worn, it was esteemed a certain preservative from sudden death. An amulet of this kind was found on the person of a murderer who died of fever in Chichester gaol, 1749. And another of them in the possession of a Spanish soldier sentenced to be shot at Juliers, 1568, by the Prince of Orange. The party chosen to carry out the sentence in this instance fired at the Spaniard for half a day, but never once hit him. Wearied out at last they threw down their weapons, stripped the invulnerable scoundrel, and after a close search discovered and removed his talisman. Then resuming their ball practice, they killed him at the very first shot. Similar amulets were worn by most of the political assassins of the era—a whole museum of them being found in the pockets of the murderer of William the Silent.

It was, however, with respect to the future that the necromancers were most in request. There were countless different methods of shadowing vaguely the event of love, hate, or war. Most of them are still practised, and nearly all are too well known to require more than allusion—with the following passing strange-exception: did any one write the names of the three kings of Cologne on his forehead with his own blood on New Year's eve, to him it was believed the whole scene and circumstance of his death would be revealed in a mirror at midnight. This was a kind of oracle much resorted to by conspirators and intending regicides. When details were required, an incantation was indispensable. A very solemn matter was this, and solemnly was it undertaken. A place was selected awful in its desolation, wildness, or memories—if possible, in all. Within it a circle was traced with a weapon that had taken life. The circumference of this ring was fortified with mystic devices and sacred names. Upon its centre a fire was kindled which was fed all through the ceremony by scented drugs and smoke-producing herbs. Within stood the dark-robed Archimagus inscribed from crest to heel with words and signs of power; and by his side cowered his assistant and his employer. Everything was done to heighten

the natural terrors of the hour and the place, until, needing no physical contrivance to deceive it, the imagination was ready to recognise a demon in every shadow and a mystic voice in every passing sound. And this was still more likely to be the case when, as was often done—one occasion by Edward Kelly and Paul Waring in the churchyard of Walton-in-the-Dale—the performance was rendered paralysing in its horror by the exhumation of a recently buried body and the invocation of the parted spirit with all the appalling forms prescribed by the craft. Few minds could then retain sufficient coolness to scrutinize the words of fate that seemed to issue so unwillingly from the livid lips—especially if, as was recommended by the profound among the magi, the remains were those of a suicide or executed assassin. Nor was it merely to procure a knowledge of particular events that incantations were undertaken. Wizards frequently indulged in them in order to twine a malign spell inextricably about some victim, or to chain fortune to their side, or to win a great and permanent increase of prophetic power. As a specimen we give the following, much as the actors—two stalwart Highland men—reported it. Having provided themselves with all things necessary, including some hundreds of black cats, for which they must have ransacked half Scotland, Allan andlachlain retired one evening to a lonely barn. This place had three recommendations—it stood in a weird valley, it had doors opening east and west, and a herdsman had destroyed himself within a short time before: indeed a portion of the fatal cord still dangled from one of the beams. The circle traced and the fire kindled, the necromancers began by dedicating the cats to all the demons. And for four days and nights they continued the incantation, without so much as tasting a drop of whisky or daring to pause for a moment. Allan invoked the Satanic potentates name by name—how he learnt them we are not told—posturing and yelling the while like a prophet of Baal. Iachlain went on as incessantly with his part of the performance—spitting the cats and roasting them to death one by one. For a time nothing (“call you that nothing?”) was heard but the yells of the tortured animals, the shrieks of the wizards, and the howl of a terrific storm, which must have formed a very pretty lullaby between them. But as the first rays of the rising moon fell upon the barn, the scream of the roasting cat was prolonged in tones still more awful without, and directly after a tremendous black tom threw a somersault into the shed, announced his advent with an ear-piercing “mohrow,” and charged the magicians. He was hurled back, however, from the circle as if he had dashed against a solid wall. Finding the cat-killers secure, the phantom scampered round and round their fortress, assailing them with a curious mixture of feline and human imprecations. As the moon rose higher, fiend after fiend lounged in, each surpassing his predecessor in grotesque hideousness. And truly the scene would have made the fortune of a pantomime “on the Surrey side of the water.” The storm raged—rocking not merely the barn but the very earth itself to its centre; the thunders rattled ceaselessly; the lightnings flew—not in arrowy flashes,

but in broad blue sheets ; singular meteors swept round and through the edifice, and fireballs, spouting from the ground or dropping from the roof, exploded momentarily on the verge of the charmed circle. And the actors were worthy of the scene. In the centre, intent on their ghastly occupation, stood two dark figures enveloped in black bulls' hides, the horns and tails conspicuous : now half revealed by the dusky glare of the fire, now fading to the merest shadows in the smoke, and occasionally illuminated like strange transparencies by the lightning blaze. And round in heaps squatted countless shapes of terror, spotting the gloom with their glowing eyes and appalling it with their cries. The night passed and the day broke, but the wizards still maintained their occupation. The storm subsided a little, and the demons disappeared from the broad sunshine ; but peering eyes in each dark nook and unearthly sounds everywhere still revealed their presence. The moment the sun went down again the storm without and the saturnalia within burst forth in fiercer form. Thus the fourth midnight came. By this Allan's voice had sunk to a whisper, and Lachlain's arm grown weary to numbness ; and the struggle appeared to weigh at least as heavily on the demon host. Now the latter were despairing and blasphemous in dread of losing their prey as the kinsmen roused themselves for a spurt, and now jubilant in the prospect of speedy triumph as the wizards relapsed into the jaded movements of exhaustion. At length, and not a moment too soon, the first rays of the rising sun shot over the rocks, and then—wasn't there a catterwauling ! But far above the general concert rang a single "mi-aw" that echoed far through the woods and dells. Looking up to the roof the wizards saw a beast—in form a cat, in size an elephant—crouched on the end of a beam, his eyes two coals, fire foaming from his lips, and long streams of sparks dropping from his claws and the end of his lashing tail. "It was," said one of the wizards, "old Fireworks himself, waiting to grant the boon which we had won ; and we sat us down and took a dram."

One of the tricks attributed to the necromancers by the common consent of tradition was that of committing their treasure to the protection of evil spirits. Similar stories are told of the buccaneers. These desperadoes were in the habit of burying their valuables in some secluded nook or unfrequented islet, killing a captive at the same time and interring him with the spoil, which thenceforward his spirit was supposed to guard against all but the depositor. We are not told whether this course was pursued by the mediæval Thaumaturgist, but remembering several instances, some of them recent, wherein ancient hoards have been discovered in the midst of human remains, it certainly seems that the practice of the pirates was derived from that of the wizards in similar circumstances. Be that as it may, the recovery of these treasures from the grasp of the demon was accounted the most difficult feat in the whole range of the magic art, and was only to be achieved by its most accomplished masters. Who these were, at least in the opinion of our ancestors, the following story will show : Our authority, William of Malmesbury (obit 1142), declares that it was

related to himself by a brother monk, whom he describes as a man of sober speech and good repute, well stricken in years, and an excellent physician. "At the age of seven," says the veracious leech (we omit his moral remarks), "I left my father's house at Barcelona and made my way a-foot into Italy. There I wandered about for years, in company with several more of the same stamp, in the character of a poor student. But what with hardships, sight-seeing, and the ceaseless efforts necessary to keep body and soul together, I regret to say that few of us made much progress in learning. In the course of this vagabond life we came upon a mountain perforated with a deep and many cavern. The people of the neighbourhood said that there was another outlet at the back of the mountain, where a vast quantity of gold and jewels was heaped up; and that many persons had perished in attempting to reach this treasure. Having satisfied ourselves that the account was correct, my comrades and myself—twelve in number—determined to try our luck. Accordingly, providing ourselves with lanterns and a sufficient quantity of string to serve as a clue, we boldly entered the den. And an ugly tramp we had—twisting in and about, hither and thither for miles through the heart of the mountain—now treading upon some noisome reptile, and now upon the dry bones or half-decayed bodies of our unfortunate predecessors, which plentifully bestrewed the path. Occasionally, too, a backbone or a skull, disturbed by our hasty feet, went rolling over the precipice along whose verge we scrambled, and, falling sheer down through the darkness, apprised us of the Lethe that ran below by the scarcely audible splash. At length, after walking many weary hours, we caught a glimpse of light before us, and, running eagerly forward, found ourselves on the shore of a small lake embosomed in hills. And blessed indeed was the light of the sun, and the water glittering calmly in its rays, after that Stygian darkness. But we cared little then to indulge in feelings like this. Right before us rose an islet covered in all directions with piles of jewels, hillocks of coins, and vessels and statues—all of solid gold! A bridge of brass led from the shore to this mine of incalculable wealth, and we dashed up to it in a body, hustling one another for the foremost place. But the moment a foot was planted on the bridge, up rose the other end high in the air, and a brazen figure wielding a flail jumped down to the water and thrashed it into a cloud of spray that quickly shrouded the isle from view. Again and again we attempted to cross, but always with the same result, until, disappointed and wearied, we were compelled to retrace our steps. Such a treasure as that, however, was not to be abandoned without another trial for it. So we looked up a certain learned professor of our acquaintance—one of the few Christians to whom was known that unutterable name which no enchantment may resist. Overcome by our persuasions—indeed we would not be denied—this doctor, having first imposed a suitable fast, and confessed us every one himself, led us, with many prayers and genuflections, to a fountain in his garden. There, while our eyes eagerly followed his hand, he described the mysterious name upon the water.

Thus provided, we returned towards the cavern. But the entrance was now so beset with demons that we were reluctantly obliged to give up all hope of success. On the way back, we met a Jew necromancer who had heard of our expedition. He listened attentively to all we had to say, and then, deriding our failure and extolling his own infallible science, he went straight up to the mouth of the pit. We saw him go in, and never expected to hear of his return, for he carried with him neither lantern nor clue. In a few hours, however, much to our astonishment, this Hebrew sorcerer came back laden with wealth, and well provided with that powder which turns all it touches to gold."

But, money-grubbing aside, necromancy was, from the Babylonish captivity, the crying sin of the Tribes. They seem to have gathered to themselves all the occult theories and practices of Mesopotamia and Egypt, and to have enlarged upon them *ad libitum*. Indeed, in the view of some Jews, the Old Testament was nothing but a vast repertory of magic, and their various voluminous comments upon it all partook more or less of a magical character. According to the rabbis, Adam learned the mystic science from the angels, and transmitted it to his descendants; all the patriarchs were adepts; and the gift of wisdom which Solomon sought and obtained related solely to astrology and the control of spirits. By the time of the Advent the Hebrews had become a nation of conjurors. They were established everywhere, scarcely less as professors of magic than as traders; and Sergius Paulus and his henchman Elymas were very fair specimens of the Roman magistrate and his inevitable Jew wise man, as they were in the East. And the nation retained this character through all the chances and changes of the dark ages. Enthusiasts, as was proved by the ease with which Burk and Bishop disposed of their victims, are always too ready to go great lengths in the interests of a favourite science, and no science ever stood so high in the estimation of its votaries as sorcery in that of the Cabalists. The rabbis, too, were the magical preceptors of the middle ages; indeed, the pieces of gibberish that have been transmitted to us as charms are, for the most part, evidently corruptions of Hebrew phrases. Their own practices are not recorded, indeed—they were too vigilant in guarding them from view—but we know that several of their pupils were notorious for indulgence in those inveterate propensities of the elder Syrians—demon worship and human sacrifice. Finally, admitting the reality of these immolations, it is obvious that victims would be chosen whose disappearance was not likely to give rise to any great outcry, and accordingly attentive readers of mediæval records do find vagabonds vanishing at times under circumstances quite sufficient to justify our fathers in suspecting that the Jews had made away with them. Richard of Devizes gives a very good instance.

But if there be any doubt about the Jews, there is only too much evidence to show that these fearful rites were largely practised among the Gentiles. The most notorious example is that of Gilles de Laval, *Maréchal de Retz*. At twenty this noble was probably the most rising man

of his day, and assuredly he was the most favoured by fortune. He was handsome, high-born, and enormously wealthy; he was clever, too, highly cultivated, and as brave as a paladin. And the times offered the amplest scope to his ambition and abilities. France had then entered on the last and triumphant stage of a highly popular struggle, and the crop which a former generation of warriors and statesmen had sown was ripening to reward their successors. For some years Gilles de Laval bid fair to realise the warmest hopes of his friends, displaying such valour and conduct that he was named almost immediately *Maréchal* of France. And to crown all, in the midst of his success he wedded a beautiful and high-born heiress; but, for a wonder, nobody envied him. So frank, generous, and amiable was he that he had not an enemy in the kingdom, and yet this man of unparalleled fortune died in the prime of life, utterly ruined in fame and estate, not as a gentleman and a soldier dies, but the vile death of a ruffianly thief, and so universally loathed that all France hailed his execution with a sigh of relief.

Retiring early from active service, he fitted up his castle like a palace in a fairy tale, took troops of musicians, players, and dancing girls into his service, and made his life thenceforth for many years a gorgeous pageant. Keeping open house for all comers, and offering such attractions, it was not wonderful that his visitors should count by thousands; and a motley herd they were—counts, courtesans, and conjurers; bishops and braves; rhymers, roisterers, and reprobates of all sorts, elbowing each other at all times within his halls. Indeed, the court of the *Maréchal* de Retz completely eclipsed that of his suzerain, the Duke of Brittany.

But depravity crept in, spread, flourished, and at length became so thoroughly master of the revels, that all who had any sense of morality left in them shunned the scene. The flight of respectability, however, was regarded as a positive relief by the mob that remained. Thenceforward they indulged without restraint, anticipating all that has been recorded of the *Palais Royal* or the *Folies des Chartres*. But corrupt as were the guests, they were infinitely surpassed in evil by their host. He liked indeed to contemplate and encourage, but he disdained to share their common vices. When he indulged, it was in secret; for to such extremity of excess had he attained, that he was compelled to shroud it away down in the darkest vaults of his castle from even the vicious eyes of that crew. We cannot enter into the details of this man's fall; we cannot pause to tell how impostors, knaves of mystic pretence, wormed into his confidence, and led him, step by step, to every sort of ruin. Nor dare we describe the orgies that were enacted daily in those horrid cells. It is enough to say that the victims of licentiousness—little children most of them, or very young girls—were afterwards immolated to Satan; and that the choicest delight of this awful voluptuary consisted in dealing the fatal stab, and watching its dreadful consequences.

At length so many females had disappeared unaccountably from the neighbourhood of *Barbe Bleue*, and so many continued to vanish daily, that

the attention of the authorities was roused. And the sensation must have been great indeed to have effected such a marvel in favour of "unshod ribalds." From the very beginning, suspicion pointed with undeviating finger at *de Retz*. Not, however, on account of his embarrassments, his character, or the character of his confidants—most of them notorious alchemists and conjurors—nor even because of the number missing. For, had authority taken it into his head to lay hands on every high-born profligate who consorted with such vermin, and who lived in a neighbourhood where lowly women were given to vanish mysteriously, very few nobles indeed would have been left at large in France or anywhere else. Nor was there any positive evidence adduced against the *maréchal* prior to his captivity. But people generally felt, as they always feel in such cases, through a species of unaccountable but unerring instinct, that *de Retz*, and no other, was the guilty man. He was seized with his confederate and tutor in *diablerie*, one *Prelati*, and his castle searched. Heaps of bones, human skins covered with magical inscriptions, and all the sorcerer's hideous stock-in-trade, were brought up from the vaults. And the ensuing trial threw a fearful light on these things. It was fairly proved that considerably more than a hundred lives had been sacrificed by the *maréchal* and his instructor within two years. And there were reasonable grounds for surmising that these were but a moiety of the victims. And yet this precious pair—the monstrous fool and the mystic knave—embraced tenderly on the scaffold, and comforted one another with the confident trust of meeting immediately in Paradise!

Lycanthropy was the strangest form of that strange faith. It was less original, however, than some of the other phases; for the same thing, or something very like it, was current among the ancients. But the strength it put forth, and the variety it assumed in different quarters during the middle ages, showed that it was no slavish imitation of the classic fable. The *loup-garou* of France and Western Germany was indeed very different from the man-wolf of Ireland; and neither of these bore much resemblance, except in general features, to the were-wolf of Livonia. The last-named country was the favourite haunt of these terrible creatures. But so it was also of every species of witchcraft. Indeed the spirits of darkness made themselves so much at home in that province, that it was a common thing for a family woman to maintain an imp as a domestic servant. Then about the second week in December the demon went up and down in the shape of a lame boy to summon the fraternity to a general rendezvous. Accordingly they gathered by thousands, including every rank. And if any lagged behind under any pretence, they were quickly flogged into their places by a demon armed with a whip made of neatly twisted wire, whose special duty it was to look after the stragglers.

Beginning on Christmas Eve, they amused themselves for twelve or fourteen days with worrying flocks, herds, and villagers, and especially with breaking their way into cellars, and gulping up whatever was drinkable therein. In this quarter—that is east of the Elbe—those who were

desirous of figuring as were-wolves, obtained the power by quaffing a nauseous draught from the hands of one already initiated. And for a long time it seems to have been regarded as a pleasant and frolicsome, and even at times a useful sort of relaxation. We are informed that on one occasion a party, while crossing a Russian waste, having fallen short of provisions, the servant of a nobleman present very quickly removed the embarrassment by assuming the form of a wolf and catching several sheep. And on another a gentleman transformed himself in order to remove the doubts which a friend entertained concerning the existence of such a power. But being assailed by some dogs, he lost an eye before he could resume his proper shape. A thief, too, who was sentenced to be gibbeted, walked quietly out of his cell in the form of a wolf the moment they opened the door to lead him to the scaffold, and escaped to the woods before the astonished gaolers could make any effort to stop him.

In western Europe the loup-garou was by no means so gregarious. There are several instances, indeed, related of small bands of wolves without tails—that is to say, were-wolves, assailing the flocks. But generally speaking the French and German monsters were solitary in their habits, or at the very most, hunted only in couples. And there was besides a sad want of uniformity in their method of assuming the beast. One of them who fed the flames in the south of France, declared that a demon met him in the fields, persuaded him to join the fraternity, and presented him with a box of inexhaustible ointment. With this unguent he smeared himself whenever he felt the beastly propensity strong upon him. And he recovered the semblance of humanity by plunging into water, or rolling over and over in the dew. Another who was burnt for the crime at Cologne, confessed that a female devil had presented him with a belt, and that whenever he buckled it on he immediately became a wolf. This individual declared, with amiable simplicity, that he never could make out what became of the bristles that ornamented him in his wolfish state. He expressed small compunction, however, for the murder of the sixteen children whom he had destroyed during his career; and none at all for the minor peccadilloes of marrying his mother-in-law and his own daughter. Others, again, asserted that they had each received a wolf's hide from the demon, which being donned like an overcoat was just as effective as the diabolical salve. In confirmation of this last explanation, a traveller of the period tells us that, while journeying through the south of France in the train of a nobleman, the company overtook an elderly peasant who seemed much distressed with the weight of his bundle. As they were going the same way the leader of the party desired one of his valets to relieve the old man of his burden for the rest of the stage. On arriving at the end of the day's journey, the valet—a prying knave—opened the wallet, and finding a neat wolf-skin within, resolved to amuse his master with a little masquerade. Accordingly, he pulled on the hide. But the moment he saw the company he felt himself actuated with all the ferocity of the animal he represented. The gentlemen drew their swords in self-defence, and

inflicted several wounds on their assailant before he could extricate himself from his mischievous robe. Of course the old loup-garou never called for his bundle, and the hide became a relic in a neighbouring church—a very much more palpable one than some of the sound of the bells of Solomon's temple; which was preserved in the same place.

Of the many put to death on the continent for this offence, and hundreds suffered in a very few years, every one confessed to a horrid liking for the flesh of children. And whatever we may think about the transformation, there is no denying the cannibalism. Certainly, as was proved by the fate of a squadron of dragoons, every man of which was destroyed by these animals, there was no lack of real wolves to account for the destruction of the children who happened to be devoured. But it was impossible to mistake those cases wherein the little victim had fallen beneath the ferocity of the loup-garou, for in every such instance the clothes were found lying uninjured beside the remains of the horrible feast.

The Irish man-wolf, however, if we are to credit Giraldus Cambrensis, was not to be charged with such atrocities. Nor was it by choice that he adopted that shape. On the contrary, those who became wolves in the Emerald Isle were the victims of a vindictive churchman. Indeed, it was in form only that these Irish were-wolves differed from the most orthodox Christians—just as it is in form only that certain Irish Christians of the present time differ from orthodox wolves. For Giraldus tells us a very moving story of a wolf which stopped a priest on the highway and induced him to administer the sacrament to his mate, who lay dying in a brake hard by. As a wind-up to this wonderful story, Camden avers that it was not uncommon for jilted mistresses and deserted wives to bribe witch and wizard that they might place the faithless men in such a situation as should consign them to the penal servitude of lycanthropy for the usual term of seven years.

Like everything of the sort the notion was a powerful instrument of evil in the hands of the mischievous. As an instance, a lady was burnt in Auvergne, A.D. 1558, on this charge. The only witnesses against her were her husband, a friend of his, and—her own severed hand! "Mind you bring me what you take," shouted the husband from a window to his friend who was going to the chase. Accordingly, after an absence of several hours the hunter made his appearance with a very light game-bag. In explanation he informed his friend that he had encountered a large wolf and, after a long struggle, cut off one of its claws. "Thereupon," said he, "the wolf scampered off on three legs and escaped, and, bagging the limb, I made the best of my way back." Looking for the prize, the pair—much to their astonishment, as they declared—found a little white hand covered with rings at the bottom of the bag. Recognising one of the gems, the husband and his friend descended to the kitchen, and there found the lady minus a hand. In a few days more the poor woman was a heap of ashes. The story needs no comment: a more palpable case of conspiracy was never disclosed. What became of the villanous pair history does not

relate ; but it is to be feared that they escaped like too many others of the same tribe.

At length, what with child-murder and priestly anathemas the were-wolves became the objects of intense terror, and the persecution against them, previously disconnected and fitful, assumed towards the end of the sixteenth century something of the intensity of a crusade ; but the first and most prominent effect of this was to make lycanthropy in some sense a reality. Nothing else being talked about, hundreds of weak heads were turned, and silly people by the score not only accused themselves of the crime but actually attempted to play wolf, though somehow or other they could never manage the transformation to the satisfaction of their neighbours. Several of them, however, got over this difficulty by asserting that they wore their bristles inside the skin. The learned, with their usual discernment, took these people at their word, and thereupon ensued a very animated discussion as to the wherefore and all the particulars of this extraordinary fact. A great many remarkably ingenious theories were propounded about it which satisfied everybody a hundred times over, except those who had counter theories of their own. At length a mob of very unlearned Italian villagers cut off the feet of a poor madman who announced himself a were-wolf—a deed which thoroughly settled the question—and from that day forth the mania died out.

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"WHAT IS IT YOU MEAN, JANE? TELL ME AT ONCE."

Avonhoe.

CHAPTER IX.

PAST AND PRESENT.



THE time which Claude had intended to spend at Avonhoe had long passed, but still he remained there. He had many friends among the squirearchy in the neighbourhood, scattered as they were, and the growth of the boy's mind had become a deep interest to him. He felt that he was doing real work in the world; to mould one human soul is no slight matter, and Rupert's whole being seemed changed. The sullen look was nearly gone, the face eager with intelligence. Still it was no easy task: the passionate, unruly nature of the boy, and his imperious temper required a light hand and a firm one, though his young director ruled him chiefly by force of his own

gentleness. He was a curious occupation and study also to Claude; there is a sort of conventional way of looking at life which every class must necessarily have to a certain degree, and it is always interesting to become really intimate with another; it stirs one to the quick to see how differently an opinion which one thinks altogether undeniable looks from another "standpoint." The strange anthropomorphic notions of a God, the superstitions, the absurd reasons given for events, the irrelevant causes for beliefs, were all experience to him. Then the difficult questions which the boy asked—for Rupert's was a questioning nature, full of unused strength—were often far beyond his teacher's skill to answer, and sometimes made Claude feel his own powers tasked to the utmost by the strange undeveloped mind and heart which stirred points which he had never thought of fathoming.

Though he did not know it, however, his own self-denyng pure life was a better teacher than all the facts and all the theologies contained in his books. Rupert grew up from a child to a young man with something to reverence as well as to love.

One summer evening after work, Rupert hurried down from Hawkshill to the Blizards', whose old farmhouse looked the very picture of comfort, nestled under the hill, with its long ranges of red-tiled barns dappled with yellow lichens and green moss, its wealth of stacks, and the great herd of cattle standing about after being milked. He passed round to the garden side, where he found Mr. Morris sitting in a sort of green porch before the door, arched over by a pollard oak, with a tall thin little folio on his knees and a fat quarto beside him. In his visits to the neighbouring squires' houses he had begun to ransack the different libraries for accounts of Avonhoe, and was very intent on his discoveries.

A green arbour, whatever it may be in sound, is not in substance by any means an unalloyed place of delight: earwigs run up on your book from below, spiders come down on your face from above; but it was not so close as in the little parlour within, and Claude had unearthed a heap of small cannon-balls from their resting-place under the seat, which had been ploughed up at different times in the fields near the church above, and these gave a pleasant sort of "local colouring" to his reading.

"Let us go up to the Great Hall close," said he, rising as the lad came up. "I've found out about the siege of the old Manor-house when I was at Hartley Grange yesterday, and the Blounts have lent me the books. Mary," added he, opening the door into the kitchen, "can your mother spare you to come with us for a little bit?"

Poor Mary had dropped out of their lessons and their talks: the difference of age and the difference of education were all beginning to tell, and her wistful little face often pained Claude.

"I want her for to rectify the house," said Mrs. Blizzard, putting back her long curls with a despairing shake of the head;—as Mary grew older she began not to like her going out with them. "I'm just banged with work, and I can't get situated wi' a maid. That Sally, as well you knows her, is nothing, not in the dairy nor yet the house."

"This once, Mrs. Blizzard. She shan't stay,—just to hear about the burning of the old house; we'll wait till it's convenient for you."

"Well, there's a cow sick, Mr. Morris, as we was gratified this morning by the sad intelligence, and I'm just a making some gruel for her, poor thing! Her calf have a gone home as they says—and I'm as sorry for the dumb beasts sometimes what can't tell how it ails 'um, as if 'twere a cristened baby: so I'm a putting some elder-wine into the pottage for to comfort her; but as soon as Mary have a tookt it to the shed, she shall go with ye, for it's a great denial to the child," relented Mrs. Blizzard, good to man and beast.

They turned up all three through the broad fields, where great elms still stood about in park-like groups, their heavy foliage and solid outline contrasting with the abeles in ceaseless motion, though the wind was barely perceptible. Little flights of small blue butterflies rose out of the grass as they passed, and Mary lingered to pick up "devil's-bit" and blow the hour from off a "shepherd's clock."

"What a curious piece of jelly," said Claude, as his foot struck against a loose sort of fungus.

"That's where a star has fallen," answered Rupert, rather conceitedly, surprised at his ignorance.

As was the case with all the country-houses in that stoneless district, there had never been any road up to the "Manor," though it had evidently been a very considerable place. Broad grass approaches, however, led up to it from three sides, and Claude paused before the remains of a ruined gateway, the great stone piers and balls looking lost and sad as they thus stood solitary, leading to nothing.

At last he sat down on one of the grassy terraces where the old house had once been under the quivering shade of the white poplars—"those merry trees," as Mary called them. "After all it isn't so very long ago," said he, musing. "About this very time of year scarcely two hundred years past. The lives of three old men would carry us back. Benyam told me the other day that he remembered hearing the story of the attack on the house, when he was a child, from his grandfather, who had been told it by an old man present at the burning, as a lad of fourteen. It's but a small piece out of the world's history: we exaggerate the length of the years whose story we know a little about, and jump comfortably over twice as long in the dark ages. A.D. 700 to 900 in England sounds nothing at all, but from 1642 till now seems to us a whole nation's history."

"Sir?" said little Mary. But Rupert's teeth were set, and his forehead "all wrinkledy," as Mary called it, in his efforts to understand and follow.

"I found two pictures of the Tracys hanging in a dark corner of the staircase-hall at Hartley; they were somehow connected with the Blounts, and there are a good many bits of history about them in the library. Sir Alexander belonged to Charles's household, and had that sort of chivalrous loyalty for the king which was a kind of religion then. He would not forsake him in his trouble; but he seems to have had the feeling which was common to many of the best men of that disastrous time, who saw only disgrace and sorrow in the measures which they had to defend without approving (do you remember, Rupert, what I read you about Lord Falkland?) He was connected, through his wife, with the Hampdens. His son had gone over to the other party, and he was himself too single-minded and upright a man to follow Charles's crooked dealings. We don't half realize what cruel work it must have been—like the rending asunder of soul and body—for a very conscientious man, brought up as were the gentlemen of that day, to take either side in that great struggle. It is a pathetic story, and must have been a not uncommon one. Then I came upon three letters about the burning of the house, preserved one does not know how. Sir Alexander had fortified it as an outpost for the king at Oxford. The major in command, 'an uncommon fransy man,' caused to be driven off a herd of cattle from a tenant of Mr. Hampden's, and refused to let them be ransomed; whereupon Lieutenant-Colonel

Cromwell coming up with much diligence, attacked the house and church with a cannon and 800 pikemen, in buff jerkins and 'iron pots' on their heads, like that rusty old helmet which was dug up in the close, and hangs in your grandfather's kitchen. The defenders had nothing but a culverin, bored out of an elm-tree and hooped with iron,—but made a stout defence. Near a thousand Parliament men, however, marched up the next day, and the house was taken. A search was made for treasure, and a bag of gold having been found behind a wainscot, they set fire to the house before they left it at the approach of the king's troops."

"And what became of the lady?" said Mary.

"She had died a little before, poor woman, worn out, apparently, by distress and anxiety."

"The rascally rebels! I should like to have hung them all round," said Rupert, fiercely.

"I'm afraid two can play at that game," answered Claude. "Remember what Prince Rupert did to the lone lady at Allerton."

There is a great deal in a name, whatever Juliet may say, and Rupert had a curious feeling for his namesake. Mr. Morris went on reading:—

"The next letter contains the undaunted old knight's order to his steward, 'To take a view of the house yt was burned on Tuesday, that I may have some certayne information of wt destruction is fallen upon us, or whether it bee possible to rebuild the walls that are standing, if the destructions of ye times should settle. I thanke God I am yet in health, notwithstanding these many misfortunes are fallen upon mee, and my comfort is I knowe myself not guilty of any fault.'"

"It's like a sudden light from the embers flashing a whole room into life for a moment, and then leaving everything in utter darkness again, to get these little peeps at what they were doing and feeling in the ancient time," said Claude, laying down his book. All was still as he looked out from the hill over the great sweep of lonely green meadows far and near, and everything was silent but the rich soft sound of the summer wind breathing in the great trees of the avenue—the fierce fighting, the bitter passions, the struggles for the right so earnestly sought after by good men on both sides, all hushed, all ended. "We may be very thankful that we are spared all the pangs of uncertainty as to what was their duty which those poor fellows must have endured before they could have taken either side in those days," ruminated Claude.

"But what about the boggat?" said little Mary, much disappointed. She had been waiting patiently for this, the only really important part of Sir Alexander's history, and it was now, it seemed, to be entirely passed over. "Isn't it he as is the ghost? what Rupert says there can't be no such things at all." And she turned to him half apologetically. "And what for is he looking for his hand like that, as they say he's allays doing, and how did he lose it, that's the ghost?" she ended, with a clearness which almost rivalled her mother's.

Claude smiled: whether Rupert was converted himself or not to a

disbelief in ghosts, he had evidently enjoyed the pleasant grandeur of scepticism with the little girl.

"Poor Sir Alexander's heart seems to have been half broken by the struggle between such incompatible views of right; and one of the old books says that he went into his last battle without his helmet, 'bare-headed,' as if he sought for death, 'and died, having slain three gentlemen with his own hand at point of pike.' His body was found after the fight, but without the hand; and I suppose that is what he is looking for. He must have been a very fine old fellow."

"But about the house after the fire?" said Rupert. "What did the soldiers do with it? and did Sir Alexander rebuild it?"

"No, I think not, he was killed so soon after; but it was rebuilt, because I find the pulling down of it quite lately; but who did it, I have not found out yet in the books; and the family is extinct."

"And what like was the man in the picture?"

"Sir Alexander is in armour. A good face, though not a good picture—a straightforward God-fearing English gentleman he looks, as brave as his sword, and as honest as the day."

"And the lady?" said Mary.

"She has yellow hair and a very fair complexion, and a sad sweet look. I think there must have been a story to her, for she holds up a sort of large locket in her hand, what they used to call a jewel in those days. Now let us go and look for their tombs in the chancel. We shall find that much at least more about them—their deaths, if not their lives."

The chancel was nearly as large as the church itself, and was filled with Tracy monuments of every age and character: fine old brasses on the pavement; a grand erection of the time of Elizabeth against one wall; and opposite, a bust of a lady, temp. Carol. II., with very uncovered shoulders and dishevelled hair, like her manners. She was lamented by two exceedingly comfortable cherubs, like glorified undertakers, their tears were so evidently sham.

"Ah, she ran away from her husband," muttered Claude, as he passed, who had just fallen upon her story.

The benches and hassocks and bits of matting were strewn about over the effigies of knights and ladies. The Sunday school, which Claude had instituted rather against the old rector's wish, kicked their little irreverent heels against alabaster quatrefoils and coloured coats of arms, and stamped on Dame Basil Tracy's brass, where seven little daughters on one side and eight little sons on the other (smaller, as became a proper sentiment of respect in their inferior condition) knelt humbly at their parent's feet. All was neglected and ill-used—the days of archæology and restoration had not yet come. None of the inscriptions, however, answered to the required date.

At last Claude and his followers turned to a large alabaster altar-tomb, where two full-length recumbent figures held up their hands to

Heaven and prayed—most beautiful of all kinds of memorial. They turned their backs on the public, in order to face the East, by the communion-table: the lady in ruff and wimple, the knight in armour, with his sword by his side and his dog at his feet. And Rupert crept over the rail, to be able to read the half-effaced inscription.

“‘To Sir Alexander Tracy and Joan Ayscough his wife,’” he spelt slowly out. “So that was the pale lady with the locket; and she’s got it in her hand, too, here on her tomb,” he said, earnestly and curiously, but in a half whisper. Claude was struck by his tone.

“Well, my boy, and what is it makes that interest you so much?” said he; while Mary climbed up to look at the lady’s face, and sat dusting it tenderly, stroking the smooth cheeks, and pitying the dints in the marble.

“It was a Mr. Ayscough who was killed out hunting at the bottom of the lawn close, and brought up to grandfather’s. Squire Blount said he was his cousin,” was all that Rupert said.

How little we tell of what lies deepest and nearest to us, even to our best friends. How astonished we shall be at the revelations some day which will be made of the thoughts and feelings of those we fancy ourselves most intimate with!

Rupert had never uttered a word to any living being about his father, though, as he grew older, he had begun to understand the past only too well.

CHAPTER X.

BREAKFAST AT HARTLEY GRANGE.

HARTLEY GRANGE was a curious old house, of the earliest date of unfortified dwelling-places. But the gables and turrets had all been improved away, and a smart front of the “chaste simplicity” of the Georgian era stuck on over them all. Within were two or three handsome rooms and a beautiful hall, where hung a good deal of armour and the pictures of the family. The house was inconvenient, however, to the last degree. Every room was a passage to another within, hardly any were on the same level, and there was at least one step up or down in every direction. Our ancestors were not troubled by any desire for privacy. The whole household, gentle and simple, had dined together in the hall, on the “tressels and boards” which were mentioned in the old papers of the family; while the lady and her maids evidently did all their work together in the one great sitting-room. Even in later days, the approach is always made bolt up to the receiving part of the house. It must have been dull work sitting in brocade in the withdrawing-room, and it was a pleasing variety, not foolishly to be shut out, to see one’s friends approaching in a chariot and six slowly over the greensward, drawn by horses fresh from the plough, followed probably by a lady or two riding on a pillion.

The breakfast-parlour was one of the most comfortable rooms in the house, very low, with a great bay window to the south, and a ceiling

once painted heraldically, but where the colour had all vanished under improving whitewash.

It was breakfast-time, and the post had just come in. Charles Blount, in scarlet coat, top-boots, and full hunting gear, was eating his preparation for a good run very conscientiously, while Sir John, who was only going to a magistrates' meeting, followed at a slower pace after him. The sun poured through the wide windows into the room, and shone on the round table with its sparkling glass and plate, the beautiful old china, and all the usual appointments of an English breakfast, almost always the pleasantest and prettiest meal of the day. Lady Blount sat behind the great old silver tea-urn, reading a letter with a broad black edge, and, as is the manner with such comfortable-looking slow old ladies, giving vent to a number of dismal exclamations, without uttering a word of her news, so that her quiet husband might, if he chose, have imagined the death of every one of his relations.

"My dear," observed he at last, "Justice Shallow says, 'if you have news, I take it there are but two ways, either to utter or conceal them;' but you are doing neither. Can't you reserve your sorrow, and give us it and your letter together?"

Thus adjured, Lady Blount spoke. "It's a letter from poor Millicent Ayscough, to say that George is dead. So now she's lost the last of her children."

"God bless my soul!" burst out Sir John. "Such an old family and estate, and no heir to inherit it."

"Poor George! He was only three years older than me; but then he was always delicate," mused Charles Blount.

So each having struck the point where it touched themselves, Lady Blount read her letter aloud. It was very short—the poor mother's heart was evidently too full to write.

"Poor woman! It seems George was ordered to Rome" (Room, Lady Blount called it), "but was too ill to start. And so soon after Alice's death! I'm sure I can't think what ailed them in this way one after another. Millicent never understood how to manage her children. It was her own fault; and Ayscough spoilt them so. I'm sure if I had given way in the fashion she has——"

Lady Blount was one of those people who look upon sickness as, if not exactly a crime, yet as so great a folly that their pity has a savour of contempt about it: the sufferer therefore is always to blame, and dearly did her friends dread the compassion which it was so painful to endure. She had never died or been sick herself, nor had any of her children, who had all married but Charles, and had healthy families, and were prosperous like herself, and she therefore considered that no one need be otherwise except by some fault of their own. It was the modern version of the theory which Job resisted so fiercely.

To have broken one's neck over a stiff fence was, however, an unexceptionable way of coming by death, and Rupert was, therefore, the

only one of the Ayscough family with whom she really sympathised. "I always told Millicent what mistakes she made with the children; they were never taught to exert themselves. I'm sure if I had not been obliged," she repeated again, but Sir John knew by experience that this was a dangerous vein to enter on, and interrupted her—

"There's neither kith nor kin belonging to them that I know of. I can't think who'll inherit. I suppose there's some far-away cousin whom the lawyers will hunt out?"

"I fancy there's something much nearer than a far-off cousin, and near here, too, though I don't suppose the law would have much to say to it," muttered Charles, moving up to the fire and setting his coffee-cup on the mantelpiece as he turned his back on his mother, while he set first one top-booted foot and then the other on the great brass andirons, and went on warming his feet.

"Nearer to them?—the law? What do you mean, Charles?" wondered Lady Blount, not at all given to guesses or the understanding of hints.

"Do you remember when Rupert was killed seven years ago, he was carried up to a little old farm-house on the hill at Avonhoe? There was a boy there as like to him as Bran is to Maida," and with his foot he stirred up the two terriers on the hearthrug who were watching him keenly, and looked as if they understood perfectly everything that he said. "The surgeon saw it as plainly as I did."

"And the mother?"

"There was a tall youngish woman there, but she never spoke, and I hardly saw her; I can't say whether she was the mother or not. Pangbourne was the name. I know the boy's alive, because Claude Morris has taken a great interest in him, and has often talked to me about him.

Charles did not add that, knowing the young curate's small means and his desire to help the boy, he had several times given him money to use for the lad.

"Don't I remember something about sending a dairymaid down to Scarsfield," said Sir John, "ages and ages ago?"

"Yes," said Lady Blount, a good deal shocked, "I think I do."

"I wonder whether Ayscough would wish to inquire about it? I can't do it this week at all events. I shall be kept all day at the Poor Law Board—there's no hurry," said Sir John, as he went off to his work and Charles to his play. "At all events we must have young Morris over here, and see what he says, before we do anything in the matter."

Lady Blount considered the matter in her slow way, and determined if ever she saw "poor Millicent," she might settle then whether to mention the subject; there was no need to do anything now.

Charles fully intended to have ridden over that day to Avonhoe to see what had become of the lad, but the hounds went in the other direction: there was an exciting run, and other interests on hand. Three little fox-cubs were dug out of a bank, their mother having been killed. Charles put them in his cap and carried them carefully home,

and was very busy in finding a nurse for the valuable vermin. A dog was too rough for their delicate natures, and at last with some difficulty he persuaded the old housekeeper (with whom he was all-powerful since the days when he used to win gingerbread nuts and jam out of her in the holidays) to let him have that dainty person, the "room cat," who had had kittens, but undertook the charge rather unwillingly. These important cares took off his mind, and other things succeeded which put off his visit to Hawkshill for a few days.

CHAPTER XI.

A SUMMER'S NIGHT.

It was the stillest possible night, the moon just rising low behind the trees of the avenue at Avonhoe, and the long shadows stretching black and cold across the broad fields near the old church, as Claude Morris walked slowly home from a visit to a sick parishioner: the freshly mown grass, which stretched up to the very wall, had something of the trimmed look of my lady's ancient pleasure-ground. A great oak grew close to the east end, and its tangled forest of boughs stood out against the immeasurable space of deep dark-blue sky above. The tall chancel window, with its slender tracery, was marked with a gleaming touch here and there, and the stone cross above and a highly ornamented little turret stood up in full light. The avenue stretched before him like the aisles of a vast cathedral, and the tangled shadows lay with an intense blackness which one never sees except in contrast with the moon's cold light. It is like putting nature into the painting-room of an artist; familiar objects are thrown into stronger effects of light and shadow, and make pictures of themselves. The "owl's long cry" sounded in different directions, and watchdogs answered each other from distant farms with a sort of music born of the night stillness. There was a fresh scent in the air sweeter than by day carried by the low night breeze. A single cypress remained of the old garden which once lay under the wall of the church, and the remains of a white jessamine whose fragrance mingled with the hay.

Claude sat down on a tombstone, struck by the expediting beauty of the scene: presently he was joined by Rupert returning from a neighbouring village.

"Where do you come from, my lad?" said Claude.

"From Oxmoor under the Wood,
The dirtiest town that ever has stood,

on an errand for my grandfather; but it was dry to-day, and not so bad as commonly."

The sayings and proverbs of the country turn chiefly on the sufferings entailed by the clay soil.

"Oh," replied Claude, "I've just found out that Shakspeare was once staying with the Constable there, and picked Justice Shallow and the

recruiting scene out of the mire at your despised Oxmoor. There are wonderfully curious things to be found in the mud everywhere, if we'd eyes like his to see them. There's an interesting story in every human life, if only we knew it—deeper tragedies even than his, silent sacrifices, unconscious heroism. What strange things we shall know some day about our fellow-creatures ! ”

Rupert was silent, and they walked on together. Claude had forgotten his “instructive remarks” in the lovely sights and sounds of the night, when the lad pressed anxiously up to him.

“Mr. Morris, do you remember hearing of the red-coat that was killed at the bottom of the Hall close ? ” said he, quite suddenly.

“Yes,” answered Claude, wondering at the expression in his face, the vehement light with which his great black eyes were flashing, and the eager feeling which stirred his whole face. “You said his name was Ayscough. I meant to ask Charles Blount about it when I saw him.”

“He was my father,” said Rupert, moodily.

“My dear boy,” answered Claude, much startled, “are you sure ? What makes you think so ? I remember your saying that your mother never had spoken about it to any one.”

“No more she never did. But when the fellow was brought up to our house she threw herself on the body, and moaned and talked to it, and kissed it, and telled it to speak to her, and she called him Rupert, and cried like as if her heart would break.” Rupert always relapsed into dialect when he was much moved. “I know she was up in the north with a great house : curse them, and curse him too with a ——”

“My dear boy, don't talk of him in that way. He's dead ; and, after all, he was your father, if what you think is true,” said Claude, much shocked, and yet hardly knowing what to say.

“And why should I not ? ” replied Rupert, with concentrated bitterness. “Wherein was he aught to me ? He swore a great oath at me when I opened his gate for'n, and struck at me with his whip,” he added, fiercely. “And that's all ever ‘my father’ did for me in all my born days. What like of a father were that ? ”

Claude was silent. “Look, my boy,” he said at last, “you don't suppose that I'm defending him. But hear me. He's gone where he cannot undo his evil deeds here, though he should seek it with tears ; but, dear lad, you are still in the world where undoing is possible ; the worst of his ill doings are the bad passions they have left behind—you can remedy these at least ; you can bury away the worst of the poison that is in your heart. Forgive as you hope to be forgiven. Because he yielded to bad, isn't it reason the more why you should strive against it ? We may win good out of evil if we choose. Let his sin end with him, Rupert ; he is sorry enough where he is ; don't inflict the double burden of your ruin on him also,” said Claude, with almost the tender pleading of a woman.

“And my mother,” muttered the lad, wrathfully, “what do you say to her bitter, wasted life ? ”

"Well, my lad, and who alone can do anything now for her? What is the only thing which can give her pleasure? It is your well doing."

"She cares little enow for me," said Rupert, moodily.

"She cares little enough for anything else, however," answered Claude, gently.

The storm was subsiding; the pent-up feeling over which the lad had so long been brooding, which had grown strong and bitter in the darkness, had been soothed by the outbreak; he sat down and buried his face in his hands.

"I should like to go away," he said at last, "to try and earn my living elsewhere. I want to be a soldier: to go out and do something. I'm as good as my father, and he were one," said he, with the curious fascination and yet repulsion which seemed to hang for him round the memory of his father.

"It would have to be as a private soldier, then, and you'll hardly like that," said Claude; "I can't get anything else for you, you know. Commissions cost a great deal of money."

"Yes, but I wouldn't stay so. I'd rise. People must begin somewhere. I'd go to India or somewhere and rise. Everybody who can work and can wait must rise; don't you remember saying so one day," cried Rupert, excitedly, "when you were talking of those old fellows?" And he tossed back the masses of black hair on his handsome head with a motion which, though neither he nor Claude knew it, was inherited from his unknown father. Tricks of manner descend more often in a race than features.

Claude often felt as if he were attempting to drive an untamed colt strong and swift of foot, and his chance sayings were sometimes brought up against him very inconveniently.

"Rupert Ayscough—so that's what his name might have been," said Claude to himself, as they went away together. "I must ask Charles Blount about the man who was killed here and his family." But the Blounts were all away at the time.

Rupert was strangely restless the whole of the next day—his mother could hardly make him out; he seemed scarcely to hear when he was spoken to, and to be able to settle to nothing.

"What were it as ye was watching, lad?" said his mother, coming up to him as he stood at the door looking thoughtfully out into the gathering twilight. He did not answer, and turned away hastily. "I've a fotch that coat from Mr. Morris," she went on, thinking to do him a pleasure. "He telled me, a while back, you was welcome to 't, could I make a shift and turn it into a garment triglike for you o' Sundays, but 'twill be a hard matter for to let it out from him to you. Ye did allays mark for to be tall and big too, as you've the best of rights to 't," added Cecily to herself, trying the coat upon him somewhat despondingly.

"It will serve me my time well enow while I'm here—'twon't be long now," answered he, repenting as soon as the words were out of his mouth; he had not intended to say anything of his plans till all was arranged to carry them out. He did not want to discuss the question with his mother, and could have bitten out his tongue.

"Your time here? Why, where ever would ye be offering for to go?" said Cecily, whose hand was on the collar of the coat, and who clutched it with the look and manner of a lioness when her cub first asserts its independence.

Rupert shook himself free.

"I couldn't bide here for ever, you know," he said, in an annoyed tone. As his own taste became more educated, the faults of his mother's manner galled him strangely. "I'm not much wanted at home now, either; anybody could do all my work pretty nigh," he added, evasively.

"Nay, not nothing so well for to guide matters now, as yer grandfa's getting into years. Ye're allays so tail-on-end (eager) as 'twere," she said, with a sort of sigh. "What ails ye with the old house, Rupert?" she went on presently, in a tone which he had never heard from his mother before, but which he was too absorbed in his own plans to notice. "Ain't it a pleasant enough home, my lad?" said she, with a gripe at her heart, which gave a sort of nameless pathos to her whole voice and manner.

"There's no harm in the place," said he shortly; "but only I've a sort of crave to go out and see a bit what the world's like; 'tis so shut in here, mother; seems as there isn't any room like for anything but the cows." And he stretched out his arms impatiently.

"'Tis a roomthy house, too," said she, misunderstanding him, perhaps intentionally. "He ain't got no father for to say him nay," she thought bitterly to herself. "Why, ye're taller nor me, Rupert," she added suddenly, as, standing by him, she unconsciously had measured herself with him. There is a strange pang when first a woman feels that her boy has become a man; when she finds that, insensibly, their relation has altered, that she can no longer decide what she believes to be the best for him, and that even, of the two, her will will probably have to yield to his. "And how ever shall yer grandfera concist wi' the markets, and him as never has been so lusty since he were lamed, and as is growing as deaf as a block?" said she, catching at the first reasons that occurred to her, for hardly to save her life could she have uttered what her heart was repeating to itself over and over again: "Stay with me, my boy, I shall lose all so. I'm very lonely."

"I won't go till I see grandfera suited with a man," said Rupert, going out of the house to avoid further discussion: he took what she had said as to her reasons for wishing him to remain at home with them quite literally, and did not in the least understand what she meant, as she felt bitterly.

A boy generally contrives to wound his elders a good deal in his intercourse with them, from the two opposite reasons, of the want of perception how dear his affection is to them, and a profound conviction of the prodigious importance of his own plans. "Love goes downwards," some one has said, and most parents care a great deal more for their children, and will suffer for them what no child will endure for its parent.

CHAPTER XII

THE KEEPER'S HOUSE.

THE Ayscoughs were a very old family, they had been important people in their time. One of the sons had been out with that dashing young cavalry officer, Prince Rupert, and there had been a Rupert amongst them ever since. Their house was a very picturesque one, just on the English side of the "Border;" a large old square stone tower, rudely fortified, belonging to the troubled life of the Border feuds, with a part added in more mitigated times. It was surrounded by a stone balustrade, terraces, and steps which had grown up very incongruously when an ancestor "with a taste" had returned from Italy, somewhere in the middle of the last century. It was a beautiful place, and though the estate was not large it had gone down from father to son, or at farthest to nephew, for hundreds of years, and now, as Sir John had said, there was no one to inherit it but a far-away cousin, not of the name, and who, as is so often the case with distant heirs of entail, was not on terms with the family.

Mrs. Ayscough had been a beauty and a spoilt child; her three children had followed each other somewhat quickly in the three first years of her marriage. She had been very ill, and she remembered now bitterly, how little pleased she had been at poor George's arrival into the world: he was their last, and now they were left childless and cheerless.

When Rupert was killed they had had still a daughter and George left to comfort them. Since then Alice had married and died with her first child, and now the poor woman was left alone to give help to her husband. There had come over her that painful timidity and mistrust of herself which is often seen in an ex-beauty: the "*confiance dans le charme qu'inspirait ma figure (qui me suggérait une foule d'idées que je n'ai jamais pu retrouver depuis)*," which Madame de Staël describes, is gone: they have lost the spell of their beauty, and distrust their other powers in a way which sometimes makes one's heart ache by its sad humility.

Though she had been a somewhat worldly woman in the old days, yet, woman-like, she felt more for her husband's loss even than for her own, and she would fain have done her best for him; but they had few interests in common, had never drawn well together, and she found, if she presented herself at the study door, the poor old squire was "busy," and if she went out with him, it was to stumble about in an aimless dismal mood among farm-steadings, which she did not understand, and where she only felt in the way. And so she sat, solitary and sad, in her boudoir by the window, whence she had watched the funeral of her last-born go across the blank snow to the little church, where lay generations of Ayscoughs in every variety of costume and under every variety of inscription, and where now the vaults had opened for two young men in the prime of life, leaving the old stock still standing in its dreary isolation.

The poor woman could bear her own thoughts no longer, and though

the day was as cold and cheerless as she was herself, she went out to try and tire herself—bodily fatigue, even pain, is a relief against gnawing sorrow. She strayed down a little dell of which her children had been very fond: the wind rustled mournfully among the brown fern and heather and dead leaves of the strange twisted birch and stunted oak which clung to the rocky banks. She crossed a little brook which tumbled among large grey stones, every step reminding her painfully of the old days, the merry little voices and steps. Their later life seemed to have vanished for her, and the child-memories to have revived almost like bodily presences. Here was the jutting rock, where she had found Rupert defending the pass—Alicc, symbolic of "Pictish women and children," squatting behind him with her pinafore full of stones. "Now you must screech frightfully, Alicc, at the enemy," was the word of command as she came up, most conscientiously executed, followed by his passionate remonstrances when summoned to surrender his sister for tea. "Mamma, she can't possibly come. If I haven't the women and children to bring me stones and scream, I can't answer for the pass holding out five minutes!"

At last she reached the keeper's lodge. Old Mackay was a Scotchman, and "the boys," as she had never ceased calling her grown-up sons, had always been very fond of him,—“ever sin' Master Rupert went ferretin' wi' me. Eh, he were keen after the rabbits first he cam back frae school.” Janet his wife had been the boy's first nursemaid, and regarded him more tenderly than anything else in the world. She was an Englishwoman, and prided herself greatly on the fact, though the tongue she spoke would hardly have certified it. She and her husband had indeed very nearly come to open war on the point soon after their marriage. She had been annoyed at some piece of thrift, and at being called "an English pock-pudding;" she "cum out of a gentleman's family," and had replied by the traditional war-cry, "Traitor Scot, sold your king for a groat," when there came such a shower of crockery at her head, succeeded by an assault with a broom, that Janet renounced from that day the line of historical allusions as unsafe, and confined herself to less irritating and more commonplace topics. Strange that the memories of those days should still be so rife; the fire must have been hot indeed which left such long-lived embers, or perhaps it may be a proof only that times ever since have been too quiet to furnish a new brand.

Janet was standing at the door as her lady passed, waiting to be spoken to, but Mrs. Ayscough's wounds were too green, and she could hardly bear to talk to any one of her griefs; she had gone, however, unwittingly so close to the cottage, that she felt it would be too unkind not to turn in. Old Janet instantly began to set a chair and a cushion; and in spite of Mrs. Ayscough's "Nay, I will not sit down to-day," she found there was no help for it.

"Eh, but it's a sair thing to think of. A' thae bráw bairns gone, and naeboddy to hae the gear and the gold but just a haveril as no one knows and nobody wants."

Mrs. Ayscough got up ; she did not feel equal to this outspoken discussion of the position.

"I'll come again another day, Janet. I'm weary to-day, and fain to go home."

But Janet had a purpose in hand, and was not going to be so daunted. She stood up between the "Missis" and the door.

"My leddy, do ye mind the story there were one time wi' Master Rupert, puir fallow."

Mrs. Ayscough looked up puzzled.

"I mean wi' one as was dairymaid here, as ye had frae yer cousin in the south like ?"

"Yes," said the poor mother, her colour rising and the feeling in her throat, "but bygones should be bygones, Janet, for the poor dead. I must be going."

"One minnit, my leddy, I wunna keep ye mair. Did ye ever think it were possible as they were wed after all ?"

"Married to a dairymaid !" said the proud mother, making this time towards the door in earnest.

"There was a man-child born," said Janet, between her teeth. "That I know for certain sure." But before Mrs. Ayscough had crossed the cottage floor, the sense of what the words meant came over her. It had reached her ears, but hardly her understanding at first. Such stories were not uncommon on the Border so near Scotland fifty years ago.

"What is it you mean, Janet ? Tell me at once."

But the old woman had been thoroughly vexed at the way in which her hints had been taken, and was by this time on her high horse. "It was no business of hers. If the Missis didn't like it, she maun leave it," and so on. Janet had a clannish respect for "the family," but the lady was of "fremd people," and she treated her with less reverence than her own children, who were born as it were of the blood-royal. In olden days Mrs. Ayscough might have resented her manner, but now there was no pride in her voice as she sat down again in her chair, and said,—

"Janet, if you know anything that can give comfort to your master, tell me ; but don't wound sad hearts."

Janet was touched—the "proud leddy," as she had always thought her, "so sore beset."

"I'll tell ye a' I know, my leddy, an ye promise to hold me and mine scatheless." She waited till Mrs. Ayscough had given her word.

"Ye mind, my leddy, ye said the butter weren't fit for a Christian to eat up here," she said, in an annoyed tone, "once ye came frae yer cousins' down south ; and ye just had a dairymaid from them ; and the house were full when she came, and ye pit her to bide wi' the suld gardener, Wilkins ? Ye mind Wilkins and his wife ?"

Mrs. Ayscough nodded her head with a sigh.

"She were a fine tall handsome lass, she were, and aye fierce and proud ; and Master Rupert he were just at home that time frae his

regiment, and a deal we all on us thought o' his red coat like, and gay and blithesome were he. And the used to meet her going up the garden and going down the garden to the dairy, and she wouldn't ha' nothing for to say till him. And one evening she came up to me (she were fond of me—I used to help her i'th' dairy when there were a ruck o' work and company i'th' great hous), and she were a sitting on a creepy in the chimbley-corner like; we was stopping i'th' old tumbledown place t'other side the wood for a bit while the keeper's lodge were being roofed, fresh roofed, ye'll no mind perhaps? 'twere all pulled down just after. The butter wouldn't come at all that day, I mind," she said; "and what should she do for it? And Sandy he'd just hunted up and down for her; and at last he found a witch-stone,* and break it up for her."

Mrs. Ayscough groaned—it seemed as if they were getting further and further from the pith of the story; but any interruption, she knew, only made the digressions longer: it was no use attempting to hurry the old woman.

"She were just cracking wi' my old man and me, when in comes Master Rupert, blithe and gamesome, and she wouldn't speak till him. He'd a met her there afore, and she'd no been so contrairy. And he says to me, 'She oughtn't not to be so cross, Janet, should she?' And he up and took the key o'th' door, and passed it o'er her finger, and says, 'There! I've married ye wi' that ring, Cecily, and I'm your husband, and you maun say, "I am your wife."' And she wouldna. And I were that fierce wi' her for crossing the young master—for what were she not to do his bidding?—that I says, 'Ye *shall* say it, though;' and she looked up—I can see her now, wi' a red spot on her cheeks, very still and quiet—and said it; but for a' that, she wouldna go back wi' him, and she waited till he were gone, for he couldn't bide longer, an' 'twere just the dinner-time. And when they was both out of the house, my old man he says, 'Now, Janet, if ever you let on what you've a heard and seen to-night, you'll hae enouch to hang me and you too, or, at the least, lose the place and the garden-ground.' And all on a sudden I minded what he'd a telled me once, how that, long fur time back, the brook had a changed its course in the big flood, and that the house stood across the border into Scotland, for all now it looked as 'twere in England, and that a many folk didn't know it, and they two for sure not; and he never telled un nor nobody—he were allays so gleg and canny were th' old man. 'What,' says I, 'were it a true marriage after all?' But he wouldna speak a word more. Well, arter that, I know Master Rupert, one day he were wi' Cecily, pu'ed out a letter wi' his name on the cover of 't, and a wrote 'I' before it, and 'am the husband of Cecily' after it, and then she put her cross, for she couldna write. And when it all came out, she said she were married; and she didn't think anything of the key, but a very deal about the writing; and she showed the paper to the steward, but he just shook his head, and telled her it were a' nothing that side the border;

* Stones with inscriptions, generally Roman, are unfortunately inimical to butter, and therefore destroyed without mercy.

and she never held up her head arter that. Master Rupert were gone with the regiment abroad, and you were away to York. I daresay he niver thout on it much agin, one way or t'other; and he allays would ha' his own way," said old Janet, meditatively.

His own way—that dreary life of constant disappointment and cross, the search after one's own way. There seems to be some mocking fiend, whose province it is to stand by and turn the fairy gold of its passionate longings into dead leaves in possession. It is not the selfish and the wilful who "inherit the earth;" but, strangely enough, as it seems to us, "the meek." There is no thwarting and crossing and baffling such as fate reserves for the devotees to their own way.

Mrs. Ayscough remembered the whole thing now only too well. They had left home for the season at York, then a sort of metropolis to the Northern counties, when the grievous story came out. Her husband had given orders and money to send the girl home: he had settled it all from a distance, as he thought best, and had refused to hear more of the matter. It was nineteen years ago. Was this ill deed poor Rupert's only heritage? She sighed deeply, and was silent: she felt as if she had been cowardly not to inquire more.

"But how do you know there was a boy born, Janet," said she at last, "if she couldn't read or write? how have you heard from her?"

"My old man, he giv her an old newspaper wi' our direction wrote upo' it all right, and she were to pit it i' th' post when the babby were born, if 'twere a girl just as 'twas; but if it were a boy, then she were to set a cross upo' it. And it come so covered over like wi' crosses, that the postman said 'twere writing, and we maun pay for't; but we'd ha' see'd a' we wanted with on'y looking at the outside, and we jist let him tak' it away agin." (Newspapers in those days went free of postage, and were often used in this way to save the high rate of letters.)

"And that is all you've ever heard, Janet?" said Mrs. Ayscough, sadly.

"The boy may be wick * or he may be dead, I canna say; but to see ye both there so forlorn, wi' neither chick nor child, I says to my old man, 'I'll tell her an I swing for't; they can but see for themselves how 'tis, an they likes it.'"

In a few minutes Mrs. Ayscough rose and returned hastily to her husband. Even if nothing came of the revelation, she thought the excitement of it might be better for him than his blank misery. There was no answer to her knock at the study door, and she went in. The poor old squire was leaning his head against the table: instead of pulling off his gaiters, as he had evidently begun to do, he was sitting on unconsciously in the same posture, with the lost look to time and place of his grief. He looked annoyed at being detected, ~~but~~ she sat down, and told her story.

She was hardly prepared for his eager interest. To her the recollection had been so painful that she could scarcely care for the result; but Mr. Ayscough began to walk up and down, questioning her with the utmost

* The "quick and the dead."

anxiety, and finally, dark as it was growing, he went out to seek for the keeper himself.

It was like dragging out a tooth to extract information from Mackay, as his master well knew, but he began resolutely. "And so I hear there was something like a marriage took place with Mr. Rupert at your house in the Deep Dingle, Mackay?"

"Eh, and hoo'l say that noo?" said the "gleg and canny."

"Why, the mistress heard it from Janet not an hour ago."

"Women has fine lang tongues, and no mich sense to guide 'em, mair's the pity, pur things."

"But was there any marriage or not, Mackay?"

"I'll no say as there were na a manner o' contrack as tuk place."

"But was there anything that you could swear to?"

"Nay, but sweerin's an unco akkard thing, and I'm no clear that it ain't right agin Scriptur'—see Matthew v. 85th verse."

The old squire's temper, always of the shortest, began to give way. "Why, what the dence"—began he, but his sore heart got the better, and he laid his hand on the other old man's arm. "Why, man, wouldn't Matthew v. and all the other chapters with it, tell you, do you think, to help a childless man, and not keep him beating about in this fashion, as if you were after a woodcock?"

Thus adjured, Mackay repeated his wife's story, and was even persuaded to write and sign his statement for the squire to carry with him.

"I shall set out directly, Millicent," said he to his wife as soon as he came in, beginning as he spoke to hunt out maps and valuations and bits of evidence about the position of the old cottage. "I must find out directly for myself whether the boy is alive. Write to the Blounts, and offer them a visit from me," he added, looking brisker than she had seen him for a long time. "The village must be close in their neighbourhood."

"Then I shall go with you," she answered.

"What, in this weather?"

"I shan't care for weather, going with you, and on such an errand, Rupert." The old man looked up surprised, there were tears on his wife's cheek, and he saw how much he was to her still. She came up slowly, and almost shyly, he put his arm round her, and though they neither of them spoke, he understood.

"Poor Millicent," he said at last, and she laid her sad forlorn head on his shoulder. Whatever came now, she felt that she could bear it: the cold barrier between them had fallen, at least for the time; that wall which grows up so silently between people in the same house—each chilling word, each ungracious action putting in a fresh stone, till each is shut out from each by a barrier of dreary isolation which neither knows how to pass across.

Anarchy and Authority.

(CONTINUED.)



It was all very well to say that we English wrongly imagine happiness to consist in asserting one's personal liberty, doing what one's ordinary self likes, and that all our habits are such as to prevent us from coming at the idea of a high best self, a paramount authority of right reason, and tend to keep strong and unimpaired in us that inborn taste for the bathos which nature herself has implanted in every man's soul. It was not hard to show that in this way we had at last come to a state of things in which the ordinary self, or class spirit, of all the important bodies of men amongst us, and the action in which this ordinary self expressed itself, neither quite satisfied them themselves nor any one else; and how, in this manner, with little belief anywhere in a paramount best self or right reason, and with the principal organisations which embodied, up to this time, our ordinary self, losing their inherited or acquired authority, society was left to every man's mere unorganised impulse to do as he likes, and signs of anarchy and confusion were beginning to make their appearance. But to get at the causes of this mistaken imagination of ours about happiness, and to know how to cure the false habits and the embarrassment which it has created, it was necessary to look at the main impulses which move human nature, and we found that these impulses gathered themselves naturally into two great groups—a group producing a force which may bear the name of Hebraism, and another group producing a force which may bear the name of Hellenism. Then we took notice how exclusively we had been swayed by the force we call Hebraism, and how its unbalanced preponderance had made us cut our being in two, leave one part of it very much unused, and use the other part of it in a blind and extravagant manner.

Now the force which we have so much neglected, Hellenism, may be liable to fail in moral force and earnestness, but by the law of its nature—the very same law which makes it sometimes deficient in intensity when intensity is required—it opposes itself to this notion of cutting our being in two, attributing to one part the dignity of dealing with the one thing needful, and leaving the other part to take its chance, which is the bane of Hebraism. Essential in Hellenism is the impulse to the development of the whole man, to connecting and harmonising all parts of him, perfecting all, leaving none to take their chance; because the characteristic bent of Hellenism, as has been said, is to find the intelligible law of

things, and there is no intelligible law of things, things cannot really appear intelligible, unless they are also beautiful. The body is not intelligible, is not seen in its true nature and as it really is, unless it is seen as beautiful; behaviour is not intelligible, does not account for itself to the mind and show the reason for its existing, unless it is beautiful; the same with discourse, the same with song, the same with worship, the same with all the modes in which man proves his activity and expresses himself. To think that when one shows what is mean, or vulgar, or hideous, one can be permitted to plead that one has that within which passes show, to suppose that the possession of what benefits and satisfies one part of our being can make allowable either discourse like Mr. Murphy's and the Rev. W. Cattle's, or poetry like the hymns we all hear, or places of worship like the chapels we all see—this it is abhorrent to the nature of Hellenism to concede. And to be, like our honoured and justly honoured Faraday, a great natural philosopher with one side of his being and a Sandemanian with the other, would to Archimedes have been impossible. It is evident to what a many-sided perfecting of man's powers and activities this demand of Hellenism for satisfaction to be given to the mind by everything which we do, is calculated to impel our race. It has its dangers, as has been fully granted; the notion of this sort of equipollency in man's modes of activity may lead to moral relaxation, what we do not make our one thing needful we may come to treat not enough as if it were needful, though it is indeed very needful and at the same time very hard. Still, what side in us has not its dangers, and which of our impulses can be a talisman to give us perfection outright, and not merely a help to bring us towards it? Has not Hebraism, as we have shown, its dangers as well as Hellenism; and have we used so excessively the tendencies in ourselves to which Hellenism makes appeal, that we are now suffering from it? Are we not, on the contrary, now suffering because we have not enough used these tendencies as a help towards perfection?

For we see whither it has brought us, the long exclusive predominance of Hebraism—the insisting on perfection in one part of our nature and not in all; the singling out the moral side, the side of obedience and action, for such intent regard; making strictness of the moral conscience so far the principal thing, and putting off for hereafter and for another world the care for being complete at all points, the full and harmonious development of our humanity. Instead of watching and following on its ways the desire which, as Plato says, for ever through all the universe tends towards that which is lovely, we think that the world has settled its accounts with this desire, knows what this desire wants of it, and that all the impulses of our ordinary self which do not conflict with the terms of this settlement, in our narrow view of it, we may follow unrestrainedly, under the sanction of some such text as "Not slothful in business," or, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," or something else of the same kind. And to any of these impulses we soon come to give that same character of a mechanical, absolute law, which

we give to our religion; we regard it, as we do our religion, as an object for strictness of conscience, not for spontaneity of consciousness; for unremitting adherence on its own account, not for going back upon, viewing in its connection with other things, and adjusting to a number of changing circumstances; we treat it, in short, just as we treat our religion—as machinery. It is in this way that the Barbarians treat their bodily exercises, the Philistines their business, Mr. Spurgeon his voluntarism, Mr. Bright the assertion of personal liberty, Mr. Beales the right of meeting in Hyde Park. In all those cases what is needed is a freer play of consciousness upon the object of pursuit; and in all of them Hebraism, the valuing staunchness and earnestness more than this free play, the subordination of thinking to doing, has led to a mistaken and misleading treatment of things.

The newspapers a short time ago contained an account of the suicide of a Mr. Smith, secretary to some insurance company, who, it was said, "laboured under the apprehension that he would come to poverty, and that he was eternally lost." And when I read these words, it occurred to me that the poor man who came to such a mournful end was, in truth, a kind of type, by the selection of his two grand objects of concern, by their isolation from everything else, and their juxtaposition to one another, of all the strongest, most respectable, and most representative part of our nation. "He laboured under the apprehension that he would come to poverty, and that he was eternally lost." The whole middle-class have a conception of things—a conception which makes us call them Philistines—just like that of this poor man, though we are seldom, of course, shocked by seeing it take the distressing, violently morbid, and fatal turn, which it took with him. But how generally, with how many of us, are the main concerns of life limited to these two—the concern for making money, and the concern for saving our souls! And how entirely does the narrow and mechanical conception of our secular business proceed from a narrow and mechanical conception of our religious business! What havoc do the united conceptions make of our lives! It is because the one of their two master-concerns presents to us the one thing needful in so fixed, narrow, and mechanical a way, that so ignoble another master-concern as the second becomes possible; and, having been once admitted, takes the same rigid and absolute character as the first. Poor Mr. Smith had sincerely the nobler master-concern as well as the meaner—the concern for saving his soul (according to the narrow and mechanical conception which Puritanism has of what the salvation of the soul is), and the concern for making money. But let us remark how many people there are, especially outside the limits of the serious and conscientious middle-class to which Mr. Smith belonged, who take up with a meaner master-concern—whether it be pleasure, or field-sports, or bodily exercises, or business, or popular agitation—who take up with one of these exclusively, and neglect Mr. Smith's nobler master-concern, because of the mechanical form which Hebraism has given to this nobler

master-concern, making it stand, as we have said, as something talismanic, isolated, and all-sufficient, justifying our giving our ordinary selves free play in amusement, or business, or popular agitation, if we have made our accounts square with this master-concern; and, if we have not, rendering other things indifferent, and our ordinary self all we have to follow, and to follow with all the energy that is in us, till we do. Whereas the idea of perfection at all points, the encouraging in ourselves spontaneity of consciousness, the letting a free play of thought live and flow around all our activity, the indisposition to allow one side of our activity to stand as so all-important and all-sufficing that it makes other sides indifferent—this bent of mind in us may not only check us in following unreservedly a mean master-concern of any kind, but may even, also, bring new life and movement into that side of us with which alone Hebraism concerns itself, and awaken a healthier and less mechanical activity there. Hellenism may thus actually serve to further the designs of Hebraism.

Undoubtedly it thus served in the first days of Christianity. Christianity, as has been said, occupied itself, like Hebraism, with the moral side of man exclusively, with his moral affections and moral conduct; and so far it was but a continuation of Hebraism. But it transformed and renewed Hebraism by going back upon a fixed rule, which had become mechanical, and had thus lost its vital motive-power; by letting the thought play freely around this old rule, and perceive its inadequacy; by developing a new motive-power, which men's moral consciousness could take living hold of, and could move in sympathy with. What was this but an importation of Hellenism, as we have defined it, into Hebraism? And as St. Paul used the contradiction between the Jew's profession and practice, his shortcomings on that very side of moral affection and moral conduct which the Jew and St. Paul, both of them, regarded as all in all, ("Thou that sayest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?") for a proof of the inadequacy of the old rule of life, in the Jew's mechanical conception of it, and tried to rescue him by making his consciousness play freely around this rule—that is, by a, so far, Hellenic treatment of it—even so, when we hear so much said of the growth of commercial immorality in our serious middle class, of the melting away of habits of strict probity before the temptation to get quickly rich and to cut a figure in the world; when we see, at any rate, so much confusion of thought and of practice in this great representative class of our nation, may we not be disposed to say that this confusion shows that his new motive-power of grace and imputed righteousness has become to the Puritan as mechanical, and with as ineffective a hold upon his practice, as the old motive-power of the law was to the Jew? and that the remedy is the same as that which St. Paul employed—an importation of what we have called Hellenism into his Hebraism, a making his consciousness flow freely round his petrified rule of life and renew it? Only with this difference: that whereas St. Paul imported Hellenism within the limits of our moral part only, this part being

still treated by him as all in all ; and whereas he exhausted, one may say, and used to the very uttermost, the possibilities of fruitfully importing it on that side exclusively ; we ought to try and import it—guiding ourselves by the ideal of a human nature harmoniously perfect at all points—into all the lines of our activity, and only by so doing can rightly quicken, refresh, and renew those very instincts, now so much baffled, to which Hebraism makes appeal.

But if we will not be warned by the confusion visible enough at present in our thinking and acting, that we are in a false line in having developed our Hebrew side so exclusively, and our Hellenic side so feebly and at random, in loving fixed rules of action so much more than the intelligible law of things, let us listen to a remarkable testimony which the opinion of the world around us offers. All the world now sets great and increasing value on three objects which have long been very dear to us, and pursues them in its own way, or tries to pursue them. These three objects are industrial enterprise, bodily exercises, and freedom. Certainly we have, before and beyond our neighbours, given ourselves to these three things with ardent passion and with high success. And this our neighbours cannot but acknowledge ; and they must needs, when they themselves turn to these things, have an eye to our example, and take something of our practice. Now, generally, when people are interested in an object of pursuit, they cannot help feeling an enthusiasm for those who have already laboured successfully at it, and for their success ; not only do they study them, they also love and admire them. In this way a man who is interested in the art of war not only acquaints himself with the performance of great generals, but he has an admiration and enthusiasm for them. So, too, one who wants to be a painter or a poet cannot help loving and admiring the great painters or poets who have gone before him and shown him the way. But it is strange with how little of love, admiration, or enthusiasm, the world regards us and our freedom, our bodily exercises, and our industrial prowess, much as these things themselves are beginning to interest it. And is not the reason because we follow each of these things in a mechanical manner, as an end in and for itself, and not in reference to a general end of human perfection ? and this makes our pursuit of them uninteresting to humanity, and not what the world truly wants ? It seems to them mere machinery that we can, knowingly, teach them to worship—a mere fetish ; British freedom, British industry, British muscularity, we work for each of these three things blindly, with no notion of giving each its due proportion and prominence, because we have no ideal of harmonious human perfection before our minds, to set our work in motion and to guide it. So the rest of the world, desiring industry, or freedom, or bodily strength, yet desiring these not, as we do, absolutely, but as means to something else, imitate, indeed, of our practice what seems useful for them, but us, whose practice they imitate, they seem to entertain neither love nor admiration for. Let us observe, on the other hand, the love and enthusiasm excited by others who have laboured for these very things.

Perhaps of what we call industrial enterprise it is not easy to find examples in former times; but let us consider how Greek freedom and Greek gymnastics have attracted the love and praise of mankind, who give so little love and praise to ours. And what can be the reason of this difference? Surely because the Greeks pursued freedom and pursued gymnastics not mechanically, but with constant reference to some ideal of complete human perfection and happiness. And therefore, in spite of faults and failures, they interest and delight by their pursuit of them all the rest of mankind, who instinctively feel that only as things are pursued with reference to this ideal are they valuable.

Here again, therefore, as in the confusion into which the thought and action of even the steadiest class amongst us is beginning to fall, we seem to have an admonition that we have fostered our Hebraising instincts, our preference of earnestness of doing to delicacy and flexibility of thinking, too exclusively, and have been landed by them in a mechanical and unfruitful routine. And again we seem taught that the development of our Hellenising instincts, seeking skilfully the intelligible law of things, and making a stream of fresh thought play freely about our stock notions and habits, is what is most wanted by us at present.

Well, then, from all sides, the more we go into the matter, the currents seem to converge, and together to bear us along towards culture. If we look at the world outside us we find a disquieting absence of sure authority; we discover that only in right reason can we get a source of sure authority, and culture brings us towards right reason. If we look at our own inner world, we find all manner of confusion arising out of the habits of unintelligent routine and one-sided growth, to which a too exclusive worship of fire, strength, earnestness, and action has brought us. What we want is a fuller harmonious development of our humanity, a free play of thought upon our routine notions, spontaneity of consciousness, sweetness and light; and these are just what culture generates and fosters. Proceeding from this idea of the harmonious perfection of our humanity, and seeking to help itself up towards this perfection by knowing and spreading the best which has been reached in the world—an object not to be gained without books and reading—culture has got its name touched, in the fancies of men, with a sort of air of bookishness and pedantry, cast upon it from the follies of the many bookmen who forget the end in the means, and use their books with no real aim at perfection. We will not stickle for a name, and the name of culture one might easily give up, if only those who decry the frivolous and pedantic sort of culture, but wish at bottom for the same things as we do, would be careful, on their part, not, in disparaging and discrediting the false culture, to unwittingly disparage and discredit, among a people with little natural reverence for it, the true also. But what we are concerned for is the thing, not the name; and the thing, call it by what name we will, is simply the enabling ourselves, whether by reading, observing, or thinking, to come as near as we can to the firm intelligible law of things, and thus to get a basis for

a less confused action and a more complete perfection than we have at present.

And now, therefore, when we are accused of preaching up a spirit of cultivated inaction, of provoking the earnest lovers of action, of refusing to lend a hand at uprooting certain definite evils, of despairing to find any lasting truth to minister to the diseased spirit of our time, we shall not be so much confounded and embarrassed what to answer for ourselves. We shall say boldly that we do not at all despair of finding some lasting truth to minister to the diseased spirit of our time; but that we have discovered the best way of finding this to be, not so much by lending a hand to our friends and countrymen in their actual operations for the removal of certain definite evils, but rather in getting our friends and countrymen to let their consciousness play freely round their present operations, and the stock notions on which they are founded show what these are like, and how related to the intelligible law of things, and auxiliary to true human perfection.

But an unpretending writer, without a philosophy based on inter-dependent, subordinate, and coherent principles, must not presume to indulge himself too much in generalities, but he must keep close to the level ground of common fact, the only safe ground for understandings without a scientific equipment. Therefore I am bound to take some of the practical operations in which my friends and countrymen are at this moment engaged, and to make these, if I can, show the truth of what I have advanced. Probably I could hardly give a greater proof of my inexperience in reasoning and arguing, than by taking, for my first example of an operation of this kind, the proceedings for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, which we are now witnessing. It seems so clear that this is surely one of those operations for the uprooting of a certain definite evil in which one's Liberal friends engage, and have a right to complain and to get impatient and to reproach one with delicate Conservative scepticism and cultivated inaction if one does not lend a hand to help them. This does, indeed, seem evident; and yet this operation comes so prominently before us just at this moment—it so challenges everybody's regard, that one seems cowardly in blinking it. So let us venture to try and see whether this conspicuous operation is one of those round which we need to let our consciousness play freely and reveal what manner of spirit we are of in doing it, or whether it is one which by no means admits the application of this doctrine of ours, and one to which we ought to lend a hand immediately.

Now it seems plain that the present Church establishment in Ireland is contrary to reason and justice, in so far as the Church of a very small minority of the people there takes for itself all the Church property of the Irish people. And one would think that property assigned for the purpose of providing for a people's religious worship when that worship was one, the State should, when that worship is split into several forms, apportion between those several forms, with due regard to circumstances,

taking account only of great differences, which are likely to be lasting, and of considerable communions, which are likely to represent profound and wide-spread religious characteristics; and overlooking petty differences, which have no serious reason for lasting, and inconsiderable communions, which can hardly be taken to express any broad and necessary religious lineaments of our common nature. This is just in accordance with that maxim about the State which we have more than once used: the State is of the religion of all its citizens, without the fanaticism of any of them. Those who deny this, either think so poorly of the State that they do not like to see religion condescend to touch the State, or they think so poorly of religion that they do not like to see the State condescend to touch religion; but no good statesman will easily think thus unworthily either of the State or of religion, and our statesmen of both parties were inclined, one may say, to follow the natural line of the State's duty, and to make in Ireland some fair apportionment of Church property between large and radically divided religious communions in that country. But then it was discovered that in England the national mind, as it is called, is grown averse to endowments for religion and will make no new ones; and though this in itself looks general and solemn enough, yet there were found political philosophers, like Mr. Baxter and Mr. Charles Buxton, to give it a look of more generality and more solemnity still, and to elevate, by their dexterous command of powerful and beautiful language, this supposed edict of the English national mind into a sort of formula for expressing a great law of religious transition and progress for all the world. But we, who, having no coherent philosophy, must not let ourselves philosophise, only see that the English Nonconformists have a great horror of establishments and endowments for religion, which, they assert, were forbidden by Christ when he said: "My kingdom is not of this world;" and that the Nonconformists will be delighted to aid statesmen in disestablishing any church, but will suffer none to be established or endowed if they can help it. Then we see that the Nonconformists make the strength of the Liberal majority in the House of Commons, and that, therefore, the leading Liberal statesmen, to get the support of the Nonconformists, forsake the notion of fairly apportioning Church property in Ireland among the chief religious communions, declare that the national mind has decided against new endowments, and propose simply to disestablish and disendow the present establishment in Ireland without establishing or endowing any other. The actual power, in short, by virtue of which the Liberal party in the House of Commons is now trying to disestablish the Irish Church, is not the power of reason and justice, it is the power of the English Nonconformists' antipathy to Church establishments. Clearly it is this; because Liberal statesmen, relying on the power of reason and justice to help them, proposed something quite different from what they now propose; and they proposed what they now propose, and talked of the decision of the national mind, because they had to rely on the English Nonconformists. And clearly the English Nonconformists are actuated

by antipathy to establishments, not by antipathy to the injustice and irrationality of the present appropriation of Church property in Ireland; because Mr. Spurgeon, in his eloquent and memorable letter, expressly avowed that he would sooner leave things as they are in Ireland, that is, he would sooner let the injustice and irrationality of the present appropriation continue, than do anything to set up the Roman image, that is, than give the Catholics their fair and reasonable share of Church property. Most indisputably, therefore, we may affirm that the real moving power by which the Liberal party are now operating the overthrow of the Irish establishment is the antipathy of the English Nonconformists to Church establishments, and not the sense of reason or justice, except so far as reason and justice may be contained in this antipathy. And thus the matter stands at present.

Now surely we must all see many inconveniences in performing the operation of uprooting this evil, the Irish Church establishment, in this particular way. As was said about industry and freedom and gymnastics, we shall never awaken love and gratitude by this mode of operation; for it is pursued, not in view of reason and justice and human perfection and all that enkindles the enthusiasm of men, but it is pursued in view of a certain stock notion, or fetish, of the Nonconformists, which proscribes Church establishments. And yet, evidently, one of the main benefits to be got by operating on the Irish Church is to win the affections of the Irish people. Besides this, an operation performed in virtue of a mechanical rule, or fetish, like the supposed decision of the English national mind against new endowments, does not easily inspire respect in its adversaries, and make their opposition feeble and hardly to be persisted in, as an operation evidently done in virtue of reason and justice might. For reason and justice have in them something persuasive and irresistible; but a fetish or mechanical maxim, like this of the Nonconformists, has in it nothing at all to confiliate either the affections or the understanding; nay, it provokes the counter-employment of other fetishes or mechanical maxims on the opposite side, by which the confusion and hostility already prevalent are heightened. Only in this way can be explained the apparition of such fetishes as are beginning to be set up on the Conservative side against the fetish of the Nonconformists:—*The Constitution in danger! The bulwarks of British freedom menaced! The lamp of the Reformation put out! No Popery!*—and so on. To elevate these against an operation relying on reason and justice to back it is not so easy or so tempting to human infirmity as to elevate them against an operation relying on the Nonconformists' antipathy to Church establishments to back it; for after all, *No Popery!* is a rallying cry which touches the human spirit quite as vitally as *No Church establishments!*—that is to say, neither the one nor the other, in themselves, touch the human spirit vitally at all.

Ought the believers in action, then, to be so impatient with us, if we say, that even for the sake of this operation of theirs itself and its satis-

factory accomplishment, it is more important to make our consciousness play freely round the stock notion or habit on which their operation relies for aid, than to lend a hand to it straight away? Clearly they ought not; because nothing is so effectual for operating as reason and justice, and a free play of thought will either disengage the reason and justice lying hid in the Nonconformist fetish, and make them effectual, or else it will help to get this fetish out of the way, and to let statesmen go freely where reason and justice take them.

So, suppose we take this absolute rule, this mechanical maxim of Mr. Spurgeon and the Nonconformists, that Church establishments are bad things because Christ said: "My kingdom is not of this world." Suppose we try and make our consciousness bathe and float this piece of petrification—for such it now is—and bring it within the stream of the vital movement of our thought, and into relation with the whole intelligible law of things. An enemy and a disputant might probably say that much machinery which Nonconformists themselves employ, the Liberation Society which exists already, and the Nonconformist Union which Mr. Spurgeon desires to see existing, come within the scope of Christ's words as well as Church establishments. This, however, is merely a negative and contentious way of dealing with the Nonconformist maxim; whereas what we desire is to bring this maxim within the positive and vital movement of our thought. We say, therefore, that Christ's words mean that his religion is a force of inward persuasion acting on the soul, and not a force of outward constraint acting on the body; and if the Nonconformist maxim against Church establishments and Church endowments has warrant given to it from what Christ thus meant, then their maxim is good, even though their own practice in the matter of the Liberation Society may be at variance with it.

And here we cannot but remember what we have formerly said about religion, Miss Cobbe, and the British College of Health in the New Road. In religion there are two parts, the part of thought and speculation, and the part of worship and devotion; Christ certainly meant his religion, as a force of inward persuasion acting on the soul, to employ both parts as perfectly as possible. Now thought and speculation is eminently an individual matter, and worship and devotion is eminently a collective matter. It does not help me to think a thing more clearly that thousands of other people are thinking the same; but it does help me to worship with more emotion that thousands of other people are worshipping with me. The consecration of common consent, antiquity, public establishment, long-used rites, national edifices, is everything for religious worship. "Just what makes worship impressive," says Joubert, "is its publicity, its external manifestation, its sound, its splendour, its observance universally and visibly holding its way through all the details both of our outward and of our inward life." Worship, therefore, should have in it as little as possible of what divides us, and should be as much as possible a common and public act; as Joubert says again: "The best prayers are those which

have nothing distinct about them, and which are thus of the nature of simple adoration." For, "The same devotion," as he says in another place, "unites men far more than the same thought and knowledge." Thought and knowledge, as we have said before, is eminently something individual, and of our own; the more we possess it as strictly of our own, the more power it has on us. Man worships best, therefore, with the community; he philosophises best alone. So it seems that whoever would truly give effect to Christ's declaration that his religion is a force of inward persuasion acting on the soul, would leave our thought on the intellectual aspects of Christianity as individual as possible, but would make Christian worship as collective as possible. Worship, then, appears to be eminently a matter for public and national establishment; for even Mr. Bright, who when he stands in Mr. Spurgeon's great Tabernacle is so ravished with admiration, will hardly say that the great Tabernacle and its worship are in themselves, as a temple and service of religion, so impressive and affecting as the public and national Westminster Abbey, or Notre Dame, with their worship. And when, very soon after the great Tabernacle, one comes plump down to the mass of private and individual establishments of religious worship, establishments falling, like the British College of Health in the New Road, conspicuously short of what a public and national establishment might be, then one cannot but feel that Christ's command to make his religion a force of persuasion to the soul, is, so far as one main source of persuasion is concerned, altogether set at nought. But perhaps the Nonconformists worship so unimpressively because they philosophise so keenly; and one part of religion, the part of public national worship, they have subordinated to the other part, the part of individual thought and knowledge? This, however, their organisation in congregations forbids us to admit. They are members of congregations, not isolated thinkers; and a true play of individual thought is at least as much impeded by membership of a small congregation as by membership of a great Church; thinking by batches of fifties is to the full as fatal to free thought as thinking by batches of thousands. Accordingly, we have had occasion already to notice that Nonconformity does not at all differ from the Established Church by having worthier or more philosophical ideas about God, and the ordering of the world, than the Established Church has; it has very much the same ideas about these as the Established Church has, but it differs from the Established Church in that its worship is a much less collective and national affair. So Mr. Spurgeon and the Nonconformists seem to have misapprehended the true meaning of Christ's words, *My kingdom is not of this world*; because, by these words, Christ meant that his religion was to work on the soul, and of the two parts of the soul on which religion works, the thinking and speculative part, and the feeling and imaginative part, Nonconformity satisfies the first no better than the Established Churches which Christ by these words is supposed to have condemned satisfy it, and the second part it satisfies much worse than the Established Churches. And thus the balance of advantage seems to rest

with the Established Churches; and they seem to have apprehended and applied Christ's words, if not with perfect adequacy, at least less inadequately than Nonconformity.

Might it not, then, be urged with great force that the way to do good, in presence of this operation for uprooting the Church establishment in Ireland by the power of the Nonconformists' antipathy to publicly establishing or endowing religious worship, is not by lending a hand straight away to the operation, and Hebraising—that is, in this case, taking an uncritical interpretation of certain Bible words as our absolute rule of conduct—with the Nonconformists. It may be very well for born Hebraisers, like Mr. Spurgeon, to Hebraise; but for Liberal statesmen to Hebraise is surely unsafe, and to see poor old Liberal hacks Hebraising, whose real self belongs to a kind of negative Hellenism—a state of moral indifference without intellectual ardour—is even painful. And when, by our Hebraising, we neither do what the better mind of statesmen prompted them to do, nor win the affections of the people we want to conciliate, nor yet reduce the opposition of our adversaries but rather heighten it, surely it may be not unreasonable to Hellenise a little, to let our thought and consciousness play freely about our proposed operation and its motives, dissolve these motives if they are unsound, which certainly they have some appearance at any rate of being, and create in their stead, if they are, a set of sounder and more persuasive motives conducting to a more solid operation. May not the man who promotes this be giving the best help towards finding some lasting truth to minister to the diseased spirit of his time, and does he really deserve that the believers in action should grow impatient with him?

But now to take another operation which does not at this moment so excite people's feelings as the disestablishment of the Irish Church, but which, I suppose, would also be called exactly one of those operations of simple, practical, common-sense reform, aiming at the removal of some particular abuse, and rigidly restricted to that object, to which a Liberal ought to lend a hand, and deserves that other Liberals should grow impatient with him if he does not. This operation I had the great advantage of with my own ears hearing discussed in the House of Commons, and recommended by a powerful speech from that fine speaker, Mr. Bright; so that the effeminate horror which, it is alleged, I have of practical reforms of this kind, was put to a searching test; and if it survived, it must have, one would think, some reason or other to support it, and can hardly quite merit the stigma of its present name. The operation I mean was that which the Real Estate Intestacy Bill aimed at accomplishing, and the discussion on this bill I heard in the House of Commons. The bill proposed, as every one knows, to prevent the land of a man who dies intestate from going, as it goes now, to his eldest son, and was thought, by its friends and by its enemies, to be a step towards abating the now almost exclusive possession of the land of this country by the people whom we call the Barbarians. Mr. Bright, and other speakers on his side, seemed to hold that there is a kind of natural law or fitness of things which assigns

to all a man's children a right to equal shares in the enjoyment of his property after his death; and that if, without depriving a man of an Englishman's prime privilege of doing what he likes by making what will he chooses, you provide that when he makes none his land shall be divided among his family, then you give the sanction of the law to the natural fitness of things, and inflict a sort of check on the present violation of this by the Barbarians. It occurred to me, when I saw Mr. Bright and his friends proceeding in this way, to ask myself a question. If the almost exclusive possession of the land of this country by the Barbarians is a bad thing, is this practical operation of the Liberals, and the stock notion on which it seems to rest about the right of children to share equally in the enjoyment of their father's property after his death, the best and most effective means of dealing with it; or is it best dealt with by letting one's thought and consciousness play freely and naturally upon the Barbarians, this Liberal operation, and the stock notion at the bottom of it, and trying to get as near as we can to the intelligible law of things as to each of them?

Now does any one, if he simply and naturally reads his consciousness, discover that he has any rights at all? For my part, the deeper I go in my own consciousness, and the more simply I abandon myself to it, the more it seems to tell me that I have no rights at all, only duties; and that men get this notion of rights from a process of abstract reasoning, inferring that the obligations they are conscious of towards others, others must be conscious of towards them, and not from any direct witness of consciousness at all. But it is obvious that the notion of a right, arrived at in this way, is likely to stand as a formal and petrified thing, deceiving and misleading us; and that the notions got directly from our consciousness ought to be brought to bear upon it and to control it. So it is unsafe and misleading to say that our children have rights against us; what is true and safe to say is, that we have duties towards our children. But who will find among these natural duties, set forth to us by our consciousness, the obligation to leave to all our children an equal share in the enjoyment of our property? or, though consciousness tells us we ought to provide for our children's welfare, whose consciousness tells him that the enjoyment of property is in itself welfare? Whether our children's welfare is best served by their all sharing equally in our property depends on circumstances and on the state of the community in which we live; with this equal sharing, society could not, for example, have organised itself afresh out of the chaos left by the fall of the Roman Empire, and to have an organised society to live in is more for a child's welfare than to have an equal share of his father's property. So we see how little convincing force the stock notion on which the Real Estate Intestacy Bill was based—the notion that in the nature and fitness of things all a man's children have a right to an equal share in the enjoyment of what he leaves, really has; and how powerless, therefore, it must of necessity be to persuade and win any one who has habits and interests which disincite him to it. On the other hand, the practical operation proposed relies

entirely, if it is to be effectual in altering the present practice of the Barbarians, on the power of truth and persuasiveness in the notion which it seeks to consecrate; for it leaves to the Barbarians full liberty to continue their present practice, to which all their habits and interests incline them, unless the promulgation of a notion, which we have seen to have no vital efficacy and hold upon our consciousness, shall hinder them. Are we really to adorn an operation of this kind, merely because it proposes to do something, with all the favourable epithets of simple, practical, common-sense, definite; to enlist on its side all the zeal of the believers in action, and to call indifference to it a really effeminate horror of useful reforms? It seems to me quite easy to show that a free disinterested play of thought on the Barbarians and their land-holding is a thousand times more really practical, a thousand times more likely to lead to some effective result, than an operation such as that of which we have been now speaking. For if, casting aside the impediments of stock notions and mechanical action, we try to find the intelligible law of things respecting a great land-owning class such as we have in this country, does not our consciousness readily tell us that whether the perpetuation of such a class is for its own real welfare and for the real welfare of the community, depends on the actual circumstances of this class and of the community? Does it not readily tell us that wealth, power, and consideration are, and above all when inherited and not earned, in themselves trying and dangerous things? as Bishop Wilson excellently says: "Riches are almost always abused without a very extraordinary grace." But this extraordinary grace was in great measure supplied by the circumstances of the feudal epoch, out of which our land-holding class, with its rules of inheritance, sprang. The labours and contentions of a rude, nascent, and struggling society supplied it; these perpetually were trying, chastising, and forming the class whose predominance was then needed by society to give it points of cohesion, and was not so harmful to themselves because they were thus sharply tried and exercised. But in a luxurious, settled, and easy society, where wealth offers the means of enjoyment a thousand times more, and the temptation to abuse them is thus made a thousand times greater, the exercising discipline is at the same time taken away, and the feudal class is left exposed to the full operation of the natural law well put by the French moralist: *Pouvoir sans savoir est fort dangereux*. And, for my part, when I regard the youth of this class, it is above all by the trial and shipwreck made of their own welfare by the circumstances in which they live that I am struck; how far better it would have been for nine out of every ten among them, if they had had their own way to make in the world, and not been tried by a condition for which they had not the extraordinary grace requisite!

This, I say, seems to be what a man's consciousness, simply consulted, would tell him about the actual welfare of our Barbarians themselves. Then as to their actual effect upon the welfare of the community, how can this be salutary, if a class which, by the very possession of wealth, power, and con-

sideration, becomes a kind of ideal or standard for the rest of the community, is tried by ease and pleasure more than it can well bear, and almost irresistibly carried away from excellence and strenuous virtue. This must certainly be what Solomon meant when he said, "As he who putteth a stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honour to a fool." For any one can perceive how this honouring of a false ideal, not of intelligence and strenuous virtue, but of wealth and station, pleasure and ease, is as a stone from a sling to kill in our great middle class, in us who are called Philistines, the desire before spoken of, which by nature for ever carries all men towards that which is lovely, and to leave instead of it only a blind deteriorating pursuit, for ourselves also, of the false ideal. And in those among us Philistines whom this desire does not wholly abandon, yet, having no excellent ideal set forth to nourish and to steady it, it meets with that natural bent for the bathos which together with this desire itself is implanted at birth in the breast of man, and is by that force twisted awry, and borne at random hither and thither, and at last flung upon those grotesque and hideous forms of popular religion which the more respectable part among us Philistines mistake for the true goal of man's desire after all that is lovely. And for the Populace this false ideal is a stone which kills the desire before it can even arise; so impossible and unattainable for them do the conditions of that which is lovely appear according to this ideal to be made, so necessary to the reaching of them by the few seems the falling short of them by the many. So that, perhaps, of the actual vulgarity of our Philistines and brutality of our Populace, the Barbarians and their feudal habits of succession, enduring out of their due time and place, are involuntarily the cause in a great degree; and they hurt the welfare of the rest of the community at the same time that, as we have seen, they hurt their own.

But must not, now, the working in our minds of considerations like these, to which culture, that is, the disinterested and active use of reading, reflection, and observation, carries us, be really much more effectual to the dissolution of feudal habits and rules of succession in land than an operation like the Real Estate Intestacy Bill, and a stock notion like that of the natural right of all a man's children to an equal share in the enjoyment of his property; since we have seen that this mechanical maxim is unsound, and that, if it is unsound, the operation relying upon it cannot possibly be effective? If truth and reason have, as we believe, any natural irresistible effect on the mind of man, it must. These considerations, when culture has called them forth and given them free course in our minds, will live and work. They will work gradually, no doubt, and will not bring us ourselves to the front to sit in high place and put them into effect; but so they will be all the more beneficial. Everything teaches us how gradually nature would have all profound changes brought about; and we can even see, too, where the absolute abrupt stoppage of feudal habits has worked harm. And appealing to the sense of truth and reason, these considerations will, without doubt, touch and move all those of even the Bar-

barians themselves, who are (as are some of us Philistines also, and some of the Populace) beyond their fellows quick of feeling for truth and reason. For indeed this is just one of the advantages of sweetness and light over fire and strength, that sweetness and light make a feudal class quietly and gradually drop its feudal habits because it sees them at variance with truth and reason, while fire and strength tear them passionately off it because it applauded Mr. Lowe when he called, or was supposed to call, the working-class drunken and vonal.

Here again, then, we seem entitled to conclude that the believers in action are really balked by their practice of Hebraising too much, and that they ought to be content to let us Hellenise, and even themselves should try, at the present moment, to Hellenise too. And it is clear that they have no just cause, so far as regards this particular operation of theirs last canvassed, to reproach us with delicate conservative scepticism; for here by Hellenising we seem to subvert stock conservative notions and usages more effectually than they subvert them by Hebraising. But, in truth, the free spontaneous play of consciousness with which culture tries to float our stock habits of thinking and acting, is by its very nature, as has been said, disinterested. Sometimes the result of floating them may be agreeable to this party, sometimes to that; now it may be unwelcome to our so-called Liberals, now to our so-called Conservatives; but what culture seeks is above all to float them, to prevent their being stiff and stark pieces of petrification any longer. It is mere Hebraising if we stop short, and refuse to let our consciousness play freely, whenever we or our friends do not happen to like what it discovers to us. This is to make the Liberal party, or the Conservative party, our one thing needful, instead of human perfection; and we have seen what mischief arises from making an even greater thing than the Liberal or the Conservative party, the predominance of the moral side in man, our one thing needful. But wherever the free play of our consciousness leads us, we shall follow; believing that in this way we shall tend to make good at all points what is wanting to us, and so shall be brought nearer to our complete human perfection. Thus we shall perhaps praise much that a so-called Liberal thinks himself forbidden to praise, and yet blame much that a so-called Conservative thinks himself forbidden to blame, because these are both of them partisans, and no partisan can afford to be thus disinterested. But we who are not partisans can afford it; and after we have seen what Nonconformists lose by being locked up in their New Road forms of religious institution, we can let ourselves see, on the other hand, how their ministers, in a time of movement of ideas like our present time, are apt to be more exempt than the ministers of a great Church establishment from that self-confidence and sense of superiority to such a movement which are natural to a powerful hierarchy, and which in Archdeacon Denison, for instance, seem almost carried to such a pitch that they may become, one cannot but fear, his spiritual ruin. But seeing this does not dispose us, therefore, to look up all the nation in forms of worship of the New Road type; but it points us

to the new ideal of combining grand and national forms of worship with an openness and movement of mind not yet found in any hierarchy. So, again, if we see what is called ritualism making conquests in our Puritan middle class, we may rejoice that portions of this class should have become alive to the æsthetical weakness of their position, even although they have not yet become alive to the intellectual weakness of it. In Puritanism, on the other hand, we can respect that idea of dealing sincerely with oneself, which is at once the great force of Puritanism, Puritanism's great superiority over all products, like ritualism, of our Catholicising tendencies, and also an idea rich in the latent seeds of intellectual promise. But we do this, without on that account hiding from ourselves that Puritanism has by Hebraising misapplied that idea, has as yet developed none or hardly one of those seeds, and that its triumph at its present stage of development would be baneful.

Everything, in short, confirms us in the doctrine, so unpalatable to the believers in action, that our main business at the present moment is not so much to work away at certain crude reforms of which we have already the scheme in our own mind, as to create a frame of mind out of which really fruitful reforms may with time grow. I had fully hoped to bring now to an end all I have to urge in behalf of this doctrine upon the believers in action, but, on reflecting, I perceive that one or two of their choicest practical reforms have escaped my notice; and as, between the high-stepping political writers who deal with the reality of our stock ways of thinking and acting, and the enchanting imaginative writers who represent these stock ways of thinking and acting to us in fiction, there seems by common consent to be left for the friends of culture a humble place as purveyors of what is called padding for the magazines, I shall without difficulty, I hope, be allowed to make one more appearance here with a supply of this modest and unpretending article.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Why have I Three Tails ?

I AM now a pasha of three tails ; and yet I inherited no title from my father. I am a mushir in the Padisha's army ; yet I have never been to a school, civil or military, and have never smelt gunpowder, except during the bairam. I possess immense estates ; and yet my father did not bequeath me land enough to lay him in. I cannot tell my exact age,—I think I must be about forty-six, for I always heard that I was born a year or two after those cowardly giaours, the Greeks, rebelled against our Padisha. My father, Hassán Aga, was one of the body-guard of the famous hero, Ussúff Bey. I can still remember his winning countenance, his tall figure, and his manly step. He was one of the best riders in the train of Ussúff Bey, and a man foremost in any fight. Just before the cruel massacre of Navarino he was killed in battle, and I was left helpless and penniless, with my poor mother, Fatmé.

My father's short career of glory must have led me in after life to be, for a short time, military. But his premature death kept me in mind that over boldness often is a fatal error ; for which reason, like a good patriot and faithful Mussulman, I preserved myself to my country, and abstained from defiling my hands with the blood of giaours. I felt it also my duty to my country to allow others, more skilled than myself, to conduct in person all military operations with which I was immediately connected. Of late years this regard for my country's interests has been very easily sustained, since we have had an influx of Hungarian and Polish cutthroats as ready to fight for us as they have been ready to abjure the faith of their forefathers. Of all contemptible vipers in the eyes of a Turk, these are the vilest. Hence our good Padisha wisely abstains from having any of them about his person, keeping them well employed on *active* military service.

My mother's beauty being renowned in the camp, no sooner was my father buried than she had numerous offers of marriage through the medium of those old women who are the usual marriage-mongers. To one she objected that he had a second wife ; to another that he was too tall or short ; and at last she astonished everybody by bestowing herself upon Hassán Effendi, a thin, pale-faced, stooping, bandy-legged kiatip, or clerk of my Bèy's. I never could account for this extraordinary taste on the part of my graceful mother, unless it were an influence for her that this sickly-looking kiatip was of the same name as her dead husband. It is of no consequence now ; I only know that I have cause to be grateful to my mother for having married him, since it is to Hassán Effendi alone that I owe all I possess in this world,—titles, honour, wealth and happiness.

From the first week of his marriage, to the day I left my home, he was my teacher and my friend. To him I owe my education. He was a good scholar, and under his care I made great progress in my study of the literature of my country. When I was about twenty I obtained the post of *chibouk-oglan* or pipe-bearer to Bostan Bey, Mudir of Drama. Our life at Drama was monotonous, as well to me as to my master and his charming wife, Dudu Hanoum. The lady was the only daughter of his Highness Emir Pasha, then the capitan pasha; and, thanks to her entreaties, his Highness obtained the recall of my master Bostan Bey, from Drama to Stamboul, where the good father-in-law had procured for him the lucrative office of *musteshar*, or controller to the *tarsana* or arsenal.

Before leaving Drama I may digress for the benefit of my Franc readers, and give some account of our life at that retired and primitive corner of our empire. The mudir is a kind of governor of the province; he is the head of the civil and military power; indeed I may fairly say that all powers, executive and legislative, are vested in him, although for appearance sake there is now a *meslish* or supreme council, presided over by the mudir, to act as the highest tribunal in the province; but even to this day justice, as interpreted by Francs, is a mere myth with us. The members of the *meslish* cannot displease the governor, whether a pasha or *effendi*; whilst the latter cannot be expected to be so self-denying as to forego all chances of enriching himself by receiving a substantial bribe from one or both the litigants for the purpose of bringing his influence to bear on the *meslish*.

I dare say all this appears very queer to hypercritical Francs; but they know as well as we do that unless you have money or family influence you can never get on in the world, at all events as a Government employe; and, to tell you the truth, from the little I have seen of Western Europe, I do not think that the Francs are much behind us in matters of this kind; the numerous acts of jobbery during the Crimean war and the manner things are *managed* in the English civil and military services beat our comparatively innocent and slow-going ways hollow.

As a general rule, governors of provinces are well paid by us, and they are usually expected to double, at least, their official salaries by perquisites. The mudir sits in council almost daily, except Friday. He sits at one end of his sofa or divan, puffing at his pipe or *narghilé*; the members of the *meslish* on each side, on chairs or sofas; the parties to the suit standing in front on their bare feet, with their arms crossed before them. Our people are sufficiently shrewd enough not to incur the useless expense of employing attorneys; they plead themselves, and employ the money that would have been swallowed up by the legal sharks in a more profitable manner, viz., by distributing bribes amongst the *mealish* with, of course, the lion's share for the mudir.

A Jew from Salonica, Ham Abram Sinto, had advanced, on the previous September, 95,000 piastres to a Greek of Drama, a certain Georgi

Seréti, for 10,000 kilos of barley, at 9½ piastres the kilo, to be delivered on the following June. The money was advanced without interest, for the purpose of securing the stuff at this low price. The time for delivery comes, and Georgi has not got one kilo provided. In the meantime, barley being unusually in demand, the price has gone up to 15 piastres the kilo; and Ham Abram, taking advantage of this rise in the market, had already sold the 10,000 kilos to a Chiote merchant of Salonica. Barley is now rising in price daily, and becoming more and more scarce, and the poor Jew sees bankruptcy and ruin staring him in the face, as Georgi writes he cannot deliver the barley at the stipulated time, but will do so next year, and, in the meantime, pay interest for the money advanced. On the other hand, the Chiote merchant, having got wind of all this, presses the Jew for the barley, and, in default, protests through his consul to the Pasha of Salonica, and claims the price of the barley, calculating the price at the rate he expected to have it sold on its arrival at Trieste. The Chiote, being a rich man, and under the protection of his powerful consul, obtains heavy damages, and is satisfied; the poor Jew, now almost ruined, comes to Dráma for redress against the heartless Georgi, the cause of all the unlucky Israelite's troubles. He, of course, goes to the mudir, but his means being almost exhausted, he is not in a position to propitiate adequately our Rhadamanthus with a substantial bribe. Poor Ham Abram does his best however; he brings the mudir some jessamine pipes from Vodina, a few drums of *rahdt lucums*, and a few okes of coffee and loaf sugar. The mudir graciously accepts the presents and promises to see justice done to him. But, alas! for the hard-fated Jew, Georgi Seréti has been beforehand, and has been making friends at court by using more influential means than a few okes of coffee and sugar. The case comes on before the meshlish in due time; the Jew claims heavy damages, which he fixes at about double the amount advanced. The Greek, with an apparent grin on his cunning face, is most obsequious to the meshlish; he says he regrets having been unable to perform his contract, but it was not his fault; the crops have been so bad, as his Highness knows, that it was impossible to procure the barley at any price; he is of course sorry, very sorry, for this, but he could not help it; it was the Allah that willed that the crops should be bad this year, but he had no doubt next year's crops will be most plentiful, and he will not fail to deliver the barley in good time next year; but, as he was anxious to deal by the Jew fairly and equitably, he is willing to pay interest at the legal rate of 12 per cent. per annum for the money advanced. The Jew in despair rushes up to the divan with tears in his eyes and kisses the hem of the mudir's dress; he begs and implores him for justice. The mudir motions him to retire to his place, and taking his pipe out of his mouth, and putting down the jewelled coffee-cup he was holding in his left hand, delivers his judgment to the effect that Ham Abram Sinte is most unreasonable and unfair in his demands; how could poor Georgi help it if Allah was not propitious this year? Georgi Seréti's offer is both just and liberal,

and he advises Ham Abram to accept it. The Jew appeals and protests in vain; a cavass or guard pushes him ignominiously out of the council chamber, and he retires tearing at his long beard, boating his breast, and cursing in his quiet way and in his own tongue both Greeks and Turks.

This is the usual way business is conducted, but it is not always a Jew who is mulcted; we Turks are neither bigoted nor oppressive; we consider all subjects of our Padisha as equals whatever their nationality or religion.

During our tedious journey from Drama to Stamboul by land, with a numerous caravan of horses and Arabás, and with a host of attendants, male and female, I had the good fortune to draw Bostán Bey's attention to my literary attainments, which were really, as my reader sees, of a superior nature. He forthwith installed me in the post of secretary, without a fixed salary—indeed without a salary at all. But who wants salary? There are not three out of the forty attendants of Bostán Bey that receive any salary from him.

Before we reached Stamboul, I was high in favour with my master, and was considered by him and by those around him his most confidential kiatip. I always attributed this marked preference on the part of Bostán Bey to my great energy, my constant perseverance, and above all, my undoubted command of the kalem, or pen. Busybodies and spiteful folks used to whisper that I owed my rapid promotion to my good looks, which had met with favour in the eyes of our lady, Dudú Hanoum.

Frances and other giaours will stare at this, and ask how can it be possible for one in the mere capacity of a servant to jump up at one bound to the post of confidential secretary? For the Frances and other giaours are not aware that all our pashas, all our mushirs and beys, have invariably risen from the ranks of servants or chibouk-ogláns. These latter, even beyond the sons and relatives of the pashas, have the best opportunities of cultivating their minds and studying the true science of politics. From morning to evening, they are always in their master's presence—that is, whilst he is at the disharlik, or men's apartments. In the way of business they see and hear all that he does. Their master never thinks of keeping from them any secrets, private or public. No sooner had Consul Papperdorf recrossed Bostán Bey's threshold after a lengthened and animated interview, to every word of which I had been privy, than my master would turn to me with a smile and commence a diatribe upon the merits of the case, and his best course of action. Such confidences occur every day, nay, every hour; and hence it is not difficult to imagine what facilities are given to a chibouk-oglán for improvement of his mind. At the same time, by acquiring influence over his master, it is open to him to promote his own advancement.

At last we reached the fair Stamboul, the city of cities, and crossed the Golden Horn to repair to the konák prepared for us by order of Dudú Hanoum's papa. At about eight o'clock next morning we called at Emin Pasha's konák. I had never before seen so large a residence and so many

richly attired attendants. Everything seemed to me like a piece of fairy tale. But when we were ushered into the presence of the capitán pasha all my attention was fixed upon him. I had never before, and I have never since, beheld a more imposing and padisha-like individual. He was sitting on a low divan, with his jewelled jessamine pipe in his fat white hand. On entering the apartment, Bostán Bey rushed up to the divan on which the great man was reclining, and kissed the skirt of his dress. Then he moved three steps backwards, his hands crossed before him. The great pasha asked him a few commonplace questions, to which the bey answered with the usual temonáh. My master then having been motioned to sit, coffee and pipes were served. But I was not suffered to hand either. Had the host been my bey's equal or his inferior, I should have done so, as usual. But here that was against all rules of etiquette. I was satisfied, therefore, to be permitted to lounge about the entrance of the apartment, and to listen to the conversation carried on within. On the same day Bostán Bey was installed in his new office of musteshár, the source of wealth and honour to him and to me. For from this day my life was one of labour and activity. I was Bostán Bey's factotum; and my wits being somewhat sharper than those of my master, I may truly say that henceforward I was *de facto* the musteshár to the capitán pasha.

Every transaction connected with the provisioning of the imperial navy had to pass through our office. In fact, we held the pursestrings of this great department of the State. I will describe one or two of those transactions by way of explaining how my business engrossed attention. We were approaching the great feast of Ramazán, in fact, our Lent. Now Ramazán lasts a whole moon, and during this month every true Moslem fasts from sunrise to sunset. He feasts and regales only at night, thanking Allah and his prophet for all blessings bestowed on him; and so actively, that every Turk spends in food and pleasure as much money in this month of fasting as he does in all the other months of the year put together. Now, it would be cruel that the faithful and brave sailors of the padisha (Allah preserve him!) should not be provided with all comforts proper to this festive season. Our office, therefore, was directed to purchase one hundred thousand okes of butter and two hundred thousand okes of rice for the navy. The market price of the butter was fourteen piastres the oke, and that of the rice two piastres. Of course this provision had to be supplied by tender. Now amongst the baziryans, or merchants, that came forward there was a tall, smooth-faced Armenian gentleman, named Anaxinian, a clever and practical man, who was able, in a private interview, to convince me that it was not an easy thing to purchase such a quantity of rice and butter, even with a full purse. "Besides," said he, "butter differs from butter just as rice from rice. There is good quality and a bad quality; and as there are differences in the qualities, so also are there differences in the price. Now the price of rice is two piastres, and that of butter fourteen; but that is the price for the common quality. The best qualities are worth three and eighteen piastres respectively.

Now it happens that a relative of mine has just the quantity of each article required by the tarsanâ, and he will give them to me at the low price of the market, although he has repeatedly refused eighteen piastres for the butter and three piastres for the rice. Now as that is really the just price for the superior article, and to you I offer the advantage of this unexpected bargain, I do not see why you should not put it down at the highest or the right price, and divide the difference with Bostân Bey. If you accept my offer I will pay in to Bostân Bey's hasnadâr* to-morrow 800,000 piastres, and hand you at the same time a similar sum. You see by this that I ask no advantage for myself. But I have taken a liking for you, and hope one day you will do me some service in return." This proposition of my friend Anazinian was really so fair and straightforward that I entertained no doubt of my master Bostân Bey's ready assent to it; and I was not mistaken. Bostân Bey, whose extravagance never left him with much spare cash in his coffers, overjoyed at the prospect of getting 800,000 piastres in one lump, ordered me at once to jump on my horse and repair to Anazinian's house, and close with him. Of course it was not necessary for me to mention to my master that I pocketed half the equitable gains by this transaction. He had never given me, to his own knowledge, a single para since I first entered his service, and he of course understood that I was not living on nothing in the style to which I had by this time advanced. The same afternoon I saw Anazinian, and closed the bargain. The next day I was a richer man by 800,000 piastres, all in minchiks (Austrian half-sovereigns). This was my first operation with a gentleman of that astute race, the Armenians. Until this time I had been led to consider the Armenians as the most crafty and money-loving in the universe, yet in my first intercourse with one of them I met only with disinterested friendship and a most extraordinary honesty. In course of time, the butter and rice having been duly delivered to the arsenal, Anazinian came to our office with the receipts, and received the money. It was not until some months after this that I found bottom to my friend's great liberality. He had never delivered to the arsenal more than half the quantity for which he had been paid. The arsenal has several entrances. He ordered the lighters with the goods to enter through one gate, where he received the receipt. A disinterested official inside, for reasons best known to himself, allowed them to pass out through another gate, and present themselves a second time, with the same goods, at the first entrance. By this simple arrangement the base Anazinian realised the sum of 900,000 piastres. But as soon as I knew all his treachery I had the gisour up to my office, and by stern private admonition caused him to disgorge into my lap a part of his ill-gotten spoil. In all my subsequent transactions with these harpies I took every care to prevent them from monopolising the extraordinary cunning and duplicity a merciful Allah had bestowed upon them. As I am speaking of

* Cashier.

these matters of business, I may as well mention a somewhat similar but more recent and still more extensive transaction with which I was connected indirectly. This concerned the purchase of 80,000 tons of steam coal, Newcastle double screened. The market price at the time was 28s. per ton, cash; but as the contract had to run over more than six months, during which period prices might vary, and the arsenal had no money to pay for them on delivery; the contract price per ton was fifty shillings. By this financial adjustment the Capitan Pasha benefited to the extent of 1,000,000 piastres, and I got 5,000 Turkish pounds. But here again the honest contractor appeared to reserve no advantage to himself. Yet he was not quite so disinterested as we could have wished. According to contract the coal had to be brought direct from Newcastle and be delivered to the authorities at the tarsaná at stated intervals. The process was this: suppose the vessel just arrived was one of say six hundred and fifty tons, and her name *Mary Anne*. The Armenian sent the bill of lading to the tarsaná, stating on what day the captain was ready to discharge. In the mean time my good contractor was getting ready another vessel of about half the tonnage of the *Mary Anne*, filling her with inferior coal, painting her stern with the name *Mary Anne* in a most conspicuous manner, and sending her up to the tarsaná to discharge her cargo. The official looks from the bill of lading to the ship's name, and finds that they correspond,—what more can he do? The vessel discharges her cargo, the Armenian goes back with the receipt, pockets his money, and there is no informality to be complained about. It is true that a transaction of this sort would have been condemned by a true Mussulman some fifty years ago, but the times of ignorance and superstition are now past, and, thanks to Western Europe, we have a new sort of civilisation. It was from the French we learned the first law of human nature—self-advancement. I had always heard that the Russians were famous for this sort of business, but by Allah, during the Russian war I found and heard of a few Englishmen who distinguished themselves in it very greatly.

We remained for three years in Stamboul; at the expiration of this time, Bostán Bey was raised to the dignity of pasha, and obtained the pashalik of Smyrna. I became then his caimakan, or vice-governor, with the title of bey. Now, although my last office was extremely lucrative, still I was glad to exchange it for a new post and a new title. The importance of the post of caimakan to a governor entirely depends on the individual who holds it. If he, like myself, be gifted with lively brains, and possess influence over his superior, the post is important and excessively desirable. An entire province is lying at his feet. Smyrna, the beautiful Smyrna, was a paradise to me. Bostán Pasha very seldom troubled himself with details of the affairs of his provinces; he was rarely ever present at the sittings of the medsh, but dividing his time between his harem and the chase, made horses and greyhounds the constant subject of his conversation. A Syrian steed of good blood was more prized by

him, than a bagful of a thousand purses. Besides our fixed salaries—for I now drew pay—our perquisites were really great at Smyrna; whilst the only vexatious part of our duty was our intercourse with the various consuls, and more particularly those of the four great powers. Consuls, at that time, enjoyed great influence, and had numerous privileges; their perquisites too, were enormous. Indeed, these consuls were always our natural enemies; for, besides the trouble and vexation they were almost daily giving us, we could not but consider them as interceptors of our natural and legitimate streams of income. They were always ready to grant passports to Rhayas for a consideration; whilst every butcher and baker in the town stuck up in front of his shop the arms of one consul or other to warn off the Turks. For this protection to the tradesmen, the sustaining consul received sustenance in the shape of a regular gratuitous supply of bread or meat for his household, whilst madame the consolessa, would get every Easter a small cadeau in the shape of a Persian shawl, or string of pearls. I always considered this picking of crumbs very contemptible and shabby on the part of Western Europe.

Pashaliks would be very good things in their way if they were not so ephemeral. It is very seldom that a pasha is allowed to stay in one place more than a year. Either the jealousies of the officials at Constantinople, or the meddlings of the consuls of his province, will cause in a few months more or less his sudden removal. This, however, does not by any means imply that the pasha is shelved; he gets another, and in most cases, a better post. Still the perpetual removal of the harem and the rest of the numerous household, carriages and horses, is invariably attended with a great deal of expense and much annoyance, whilst the system interferes to some extent with his success in business; for no sooner does he get acquainted with the fat calves of his pashalik and the proper way of managing them, than off he is whisked to another province, in which it will take him another year fully to learn his opportunities and duties. Recently, in the course of my intercourse with France, and during a visit to the western world, I have discovered that the Mussulmen are not only superior in most things to all the giaours, but most especially in generosity. Had I lived in London or Paris, my master would never have known how to dispense with my valuable services. He would have done all he could to keep me at my post that he might benefit by my abilities. Now, Bostán Pasha could not move without me. He could not indite a letter or send a message without previously taking my advice. And yet, with all this, he was constantly using his influence to obtain for me some independent post.

During his Smyrna pashalik, Bostán Pasha paid a visit to the capital with his wife, Dudú Hanoum, in order to be present at the circumcision of her youthful brother, Mehmet Bey. It was during his stay at Stamboul that the post of Governor of the Holy Mount became vacant by the untimely death of its last occupant, Tussún Bey. My good master, Bostán Pasha, no sooner heard of the vacancy than he used all his

influence to get the post for me. "It is not what I should have chosen for you," wrote Bostán Pasha, "but then I thought that the sooner you obtain an independent post the better chance you will have of promoting your own future advancement. I need not tell you how much I regret parting with you; but I should fear the wrath of the good Allah were I to stand between you and your promotion through any interested motives. I shall expect you to wait at Smyrna until my return."

I was duly installed in my new office of Governor of the Holy Mount, a post of honour the most unenviable in the eyes of a Turk; and, as I fully believe, the only cause of my poor predecessor's premature death. The promontory of Mount Athos contains about eighteen or twenty Greek monasteries, some of them dating as far back as six hundred years before Stamboul was taken by us in the glorious reign of Mahomet II. There is a great deal of superstition in all parts of the dominions of our padisha, and this mountain may justly be called the chief manufactory of this sort of commodity. I took up my quarters at the Governor's house in the town of Kariés, the capital and only town in the peninsula. Amongst the most extraordinary things in this world of wonders, the town of Kariés must rank as the chief. Only imagine a city without a single human female in it, nay, without even an animal of that sex. Things feminine are all most rigorously excluded from the territory of the Holy Mount. I was obliged, Governor though I was, to send back my favourite mare out of respect for the stringent laws of the holy fathers. In impatience at their stupid legislature, I inquired of the abbot of a monastery how they contrived to keep the Holy Mount free from the birds which must abound in both sexes. But I was gravely assured by the reverend gentleman that the Holy Virgin took care to protect their territory from hen sparrows or all like dangers. My simple reply to this was that I wished the Holy Virgin had not forgotten to extend her kindness so far as to protect us from the hosts of fleas and other vermin that infested the place, and in which, to judge from their vicious attacks on my poor skin, the spite of the excluded female sex must surely have found a way to vent itself. The lady bugs and fleas avenged the wrongs of their sex by unlimited propagation and a constant shedding of our blood. These monasteries, some of which have the appearance of small fortified towns, are divided into two sections. In half, or nearly half of them, the brethren never taste meat from the time they join the brotherhood until their death; they are not allowed to possess money or property, and they are absolutely governed by the abbot; the rest indulge sometimes in flesh of bulls. Although they are presided over by an abbot, their government is a kind of limited oligarchy, whilst each brother can live according to his means. Some of these monasteries own vast estates in Macedonia, Thrace, and Moldo-Wallachia, besides which they derive much income from the numerous pilgrims who flock to this mountain every year about the end of August. But the most profitable trade carried on by these reverend fathers is the relic business. They select a fine skull, sometimes an entire skeleton of a deceased brother;

they place it in a silver or gilt case, call it a St. George or St. Gregory thauma-turgos (miracle-worker), and send it from town to town, and from village to village, for the worship of the deluded people, who offer sacrifices to its bearers in the shape of gold or silver coins.

As I said before, my situation on this holy mountain was not of the pleasantest. But, in my usual manner, I contrived to make it not only agreeable, but also profitable, to some little extent. I was on very intimate terms with the abbot of St. Peter's Monastery, one of the very strict. The abbot was a short stout priest, with sharp little eyes, and a long black beard reaching to his waist. Although at that time Mussumen could not tipple as openly as they do now, I was frequently the private guest of good Father Ignatius, when it was his practice to bring out a few samples of his choicest wines. On the other hand, whenever he thought himself a little indisposed, he would pay me a friendly visit, and as he invariably *chanced* to find me at my meals, in mere politeness, of course, he was bound to taste a bit of roast chicken, and have a plateful of pilaff. Such relations tended to fasten so tightly the bonds of our friendship, that at last we were rarely seen apart. In my forlorn position in the mountain he was my only companion, my one source of amusement. I often was amused with his excuses and wry faces when he allowed himself to be coaxed to have a bite at a leg of chicken. As to the use of wine he never had any scruples. He was always regular in making the sign of the cross with his fingers over each tumbler of wine before putting it to his lips; but he never seemed particular as to the number of times he was called upon to sanctify good liquor to his use. The constant disputes of the monasteries among themselves were a great source of profit to me. Indeed these holy fathers, being enormously wealthy and equally unscrupulous, were the most pleasant and profitable clients with whom I have ever had the good fortune to be acquainted.

I had lived more than two years in this exile when my patron, Bostán Pasha, high in favour at court, was appointed Minister-at-War, whereupon he recalled me to Constantinople, to be his controller. If the naval department be a mine of gold, the war ministry is a Golconda. We had to provide clothing, arms, food, and pay for two hundred thousand troops, when, through the incompleteness of the regiments, the real number did not much exceed one hundred and twenty thousand. I considered Bostán Pasha now as rich as our padisha (Allah preserve him!), whilst I was so rapidly advancing in wealth that I considered it incumbent on me to live in a style commensurate to my present resources and my anticipations of promotion. I occupied a large house in Stamboul, and had an excellent yalli at Arnaúti Kioi, on the sweetly beautiful shores of the Bosphorus. This pleasure-house was the munificent gift of my friend Theodore Stamati, the great tailor of Pera, who got the last contract for one hundred thousand uniforms.

During Bostán Pasha's ministry we had a petty insurrection in Bosnia; and of course this circumstance was not lost upon me or my superior.

Our duty clearly was to make the best of it. Extra troops had to be despatched to the spot as well as shiploads of provisions, ammunition, &c. As the affair was of great moment, if not to the State, at least to Bostán Pasha, he was anxious that I should superintend in person the whole management of this little affair in Bosnia. I was, therefore, at once converted into a military man, with the titles of mushir and pasha. My instructions were to put down the revolt at once and effectually, but write reports of a desponding character, so as to call for large and constant supplies for the army of Bosnia, which, when they arrived at the seat of war, were to be sold off for the benefit of my chief, as articles that had become useless in consequence of the effectual suppression of the revolt.

I conducted this mission with so much skill and tact, and with results so much to the advantage of my patron, that, on my return, to the capital, Bostán Pasha obtained for me the order of the Medjidie of the third class, and the post of member of the divan, with a salary as high as that of an ambassador's. This post (thanks to Allah!) I now hold, until I see a chance of bettering myself.

Time Defied.

Thou wert not here, but still I did defy
 Distance and Time to hold thee out of sight!
 Then Time, who saw how vain it was to try,
 Turn'd on my side, and in his own despite
 My forces reinforced with food and treasure,
 And troops of fancies gave to guard my heart,
 To circle Memory with present pleasure,
 And take me in a moment where thou art.
 'Twas my last kiss!—but Time, who long ago
 Drew close to cut the knot of that embrace,
 Brought dearer lips to keep thine eyes aglow
 With light that Memory finds not in thy face:
 And thy new joy in thy new love doth add
 To that old joy in loving thee I had.

M. B.

Early English Newspapers.

It has often seemed to us to be a subject for curious reflection that the newspaper system, one of the chief pillars of our modern civilisation, should, for so long after its establishment in England, have made so insignificant a progress. The vast power of the daily press has ceased to surprise our minds, because, like the swiftness of the telegraph and the force of the steam-engine, it has become part of our daily life. A man cannot sit comfortably down to his breakfast without having the small-talk of the world served hot upon the table, and he cannot sleep in peace unless through the day, like a genuine quidnunc, he has been discussing "great and startling intelligence, the shock of empires, and concussions of the body politic." Lord Lytton but expressed a common feeling when he declared in his well-known speech, that the noblest legacy to posterity would be, not our railways, docks, or public buildings, but a file of *The Times*. The same feeling led the great Frederick to insist upon the circulation of the journals in Prussia, and to order his schoolmasters in every village to read out the news to the country-folk. To most of us this seems but common sense; but many well-informed people will tell us that we have become too proud of our newspapers, and too prone to vaunt their superiority over "all the works of Thucydides:" they compare the intense publicity of our modern life to the glare of the solar microscope; and, to borrow another expression from Emerson, "are tired of so public a life and planet, running hither and thither for nooks and hiding-places." Yet, with all this, nothing is clearer than the fact, that for three-quarters of a century after the introduction of journalism into our country, its professors were regarded by decent people not so much with fear as with contempt, and almost loathing. Not a statesman or an author of repute had a word for the struggling newsmongers, who might expect in the course of their lives to become acquainted with the gaol and the pillory, and who were by no means sure of escaping the court-martial and the gallows. Sir Roger L'Estrange, himself a journalist of experience, has left us a lively account of their condition in the proposals which, as official censor, he published for the regulation of the press in 1678. The ordinary penalties for offences connected with the press comprised, according to this eminent authority, death, mutilation, corporal pains, and banishment. Besides these we read that "penalties of disgrace ordinarily in practice are many, and more might be added." Among these penalties were the pillory, stocks, whipping, casting, and condemnation to the mines; these, it was considered, might do well enough for the authors, "for whom nothing can be too severe that stands with conscience and humanity;" but the censor

was at some pains to invent more lenient and yet effective punishments for the printers and binders, and the hawkers and mercury-women who might be concerned with unlawful publications. His object was rather to make them ashamed and publicly ridiculous than to treat them with needless severity. He proposes that they should wear some mark of ignominy, "as a halter instead of a hat-band, or one stocking blue and the other red, or a blue bonnet with a red T or S upon it to signify either treason or sedition, according to the circumstances." It is true that these proposals were issued after the restoration of Charles II., when the press-laws were far more savage than they had been during the licence of the Revolution ; but it must not be forgotten that the Presbyterians had been so keen to curb the freedom of printing, that they had evoked the wrathful thunder of the Areopagitica, and that even Milton's eloquence had not convinced them. An entry in the Journal of the House of Commons, before the King's return, shows us that even a respectable person found to convey intelligence to the wrong side, by means of his newsbooks, had to take his trial by court-martial as a spy, and was liable to very summary execution.

Some of the accusations brought against the early newspapers are too trifling and fantastic to deserve a serious answer. They resemble the charges against Learning in the abstract, which statesmen and philosophers were once compelled to refute in ponderous tomes. One set of writers accuse these papers of raising all the wild passions of the Civil War : "Devoted to political purposes (says the elder Disraeli) they soon became a public nuisance by serving as the receptacles for party malice, and echoing to the farthest ends of the kingdom the insolent voice of all factions." In the same strain he proceeds to express his contempt for the writers who were "so well adapted for the scurrilous purposes of the newspapers," with a fire and a vehemence which to us seems pedantic and absurd. And there is hardly a biography of any one of these men which does not conclude by calling him a turncoat or an affected coxcomb, or by declaring that he showed the real baseness of his nature before he died. We need not here set up a grave defence of party journalism, or seek to prove that men were zealots for a cause before a *Mercury* or a *Gazette* was born. But we may express a slight surprise that learned writers should have forgotten Lord Bacon's prescient words upon the subject of fugitive publications. When the heat of passion is over, they are not, said the philosopher, the worst seeds of a perfect history ; and he compares them to a nursery-garden out of which, in course of time, a fair and stately garden may be planted. And not only have the very journals of which Disraeli complained become the basis of modern histories, but we may remember that Dugdale rested the greater part of his *View of the Late Troubles* upon the journals of the time, such as the *Perfect Diurnal* and the *Armies' Intelligencer*, so that the value of the journals was known even at the time when it was a disgrace to be a journalist. Charles I., indeed, seems to have had a very just appreciation of the value of the newsbooks as materials for history. Under his superintendence a collection

of nearly 80,000 pamphlets, broadsheets, and newspapers relating to the war was set in hand, and such care was taken of them that the University of Oxford went through the form of purchasing them for 1,000*l.*, in order, if there should be need of it, to make a more vigorous struggle against Cromwell for their possession than any private person could undertake.

Another accusation, once very prevalent against the journalists, was that the cheapness of news led directly to the destruction of ancient records and manuscripts. It is an undoubted fact that valuable documents were at one time destroyed and suffered to perish with almost criminal carelessness. We have all heard the story of Sir Robert Cotton, who found his tailor preparing to snip an original Magna Charta into coat-measures, and many of us have felt aggrieved at the way in which old muniments are still stuffed into damp cupboards and mouldy chests in some country towns. But it is hard to see what connection exists between this spirit of Vandalism and the introduction of cheap news. In times of revolution, we are told, "monumental things become despicable," and, doubtless, at those same periods a great desire for fresh news will arise on all sides ; but it is rather hard to put all the effects of revolutionary feeling upon the journalists. Mr. Knight Hunt, in his history of the *Fourth Estate*, countenances in some degree the notion that the neglect of antiquity was due to the newspapers, and gives a lamentable account of the time, not even now so very distant, when copybooks were usually covered with illuminated MSS., and "records flew about like butterflies." Aubrey lamented the darkness prevailing in Wiltshire on this point, and tells sad tales of the two sons of Parson Stump, his friend, who, being gunners, were used to scour their pieces with ancient title-deeds ; the glovers too are said to have found old parchment very useful in their business. We heard a story the other day, which shows that the spirit of destruction was not confined to the humbler classes. The chapter of a celebrated cathedral had allowed the walls of their muniment-room to become ruinous, and never cast a thought on its contents. At last, one spring-time, a person looking through a crack in the outer wall saw mysterious black and white objects whirling and fluttering up and down. On examination these proved to be jackdaws making their nests, as was their wont, with fragments of priceless charters and title-deeds. Such was the ignorant carelessness of a past generation. But we cannot assume that it was due to the spread of newspapers, unless we could also imagine that these offending canons, glovers, gunners, and mechanics would, on being deprived of their cheap news, have fallen back on the study of these chartularies and base-Latin deeds, of which we are regretting the loss. Many other hard things have been said of the founders of the daily press ; but we cannot in a short essay do more than indicate the chief facts in its early history for the purpose of illustrating its true character, and of dispersing some of that odium which has been cast upon it by writers whose minds were coloured by an antique prejudice against all liberty of the press. A fine collection of materials for the history of newspapers

was made in the last century by one John Bagford, who desired to be the historian of the whole art of printing. When he died, a pensioner in the Charterhouse, he had got no further in his writing than the prospectus of his work, but his note-books and memoranda, being preserved in the Harleian collection, have formed the text for elaborate dissertations by Chalmers, Nichols, and other antiquaries, which have been further illustrated by the indefatigable Timporley in his *Dictionary of Printing*. From one of Bagford's note-books we may extract the following character of the journal-makers, as it appeared to a writer in the middle of the seventeenth century. After describing them as squirting scribes, who serve out history in pennyworths, and may be called authors only by the same figure as a North-country pedlar is styled a merchant, this lively writer thus bursts out:—"Methinks the Turk should license diurnals, since he prohibits books. A library of diurnals is a wardrobe of frippery. From their weakness they are fain to join forces, as their custom is, in croaking committee; they tug at the pen, like slaves at an oar, a whole bank of them. They fight in the posture of the Swedes, and fire one over another's shoulder. . . . In short, a diurnal-maker resembles an historian as a devil resembles a man."

The system of newspapers in England is not of any very great antiquity. The *English Mercury* of 1688, preserved in the Sloane collection, was long supposed to be genuine, but is proved by Mr. Watts to have been forged at a later date; and a proclamation of Henry the Eighth, against light persons who have published books of news, is shown very clearly to have been directed only against the occasional pamphlets and broadsheets, which, from the irregularity of their publication, can at most be called the forerunners of newspapers. The *Gallo-Belgici*, of the reign of Elizabeth, seem to have been hardly more than annual summaries of the chief events upon the Continent. It was not, says Bagford, until nearly the end of the reign of James I., "that the newes began to be in fashion, and then, if I mistake not, began the use of the mercury-women." The outbreak of the Thirty Years War aroused the public attention, and one Nathaniel Butter, a bookseller and a pamphleteer of twelve years' standing, took the idea of printing a weekly newspaper from the Venetian gazettes, which used to circulate in manuscript. After one or two preliminary attempts, he acquired sufficient confidence in his public to issue the following advertisement:—"If any gentleman or other accustomed to buy the weekly relations of newes be desirous to continue the same, let them know that the writer, or transcriber rather, of this newes, hath published two former newes, the one dated the 2nd and the other the 18th of August, all of which do carry a like title with the arms of the King of Bohemia on the other side the title-page, and have dependence one upon another: which manner of writing and printing he doth purpose to continue weekly by God's assistance, from the best and most certain intelligence: farewell, this twenty-three of August, 1622." The difficulty of tracing the sequence of his subsequent publications is much increased by the habit, which he soon adopted, of

changing their names week by week, according to the quality of the contents. It seems clear, however, that for several years he was the sole purveyor of regular news from the Continent, with the exception of the *Imperial Intelligence*, printed in 1626, for *Mercurius Britannicus*. It must have been therefore upon his head that the invective was concentrated with which the appearance of a regular newspaper was greeted in the literary world.

Ben Jonson was never tired of cutting jokes upon his name. At one time he is called the butter-box, at another the news is described as "rank Irish butter," with a hundred other punning allusions. Jonson has left upon record his reasons for an unceasing hostility towards Butter and his industrious imitators. There could not be, said the poet, a greater disease in nature, or a fouler scorn put upon the time than the public hunger for pamphlets of news set out every Saturday, "but made all at home, and no syllable of truth in them." And not only Jonson, but Shirley in the *Love Tricks*, and many other authors of that time, have bequeathed abuse to the memories of the journalists, "who weekly uttered such a mass of lies." As far as Butter was concerned, we think that the charge was unjust. His journals, though instructive, were somewhat dull, being, for the most part, translations "from the High-Dutch." He claimed, indeed, little more than the merit of being useful. "Whosoever will be cunning in the places and persons of Germany, and understand her wars, let him not despise my Corantes." Yet his critics, both in that age and our own, have treated him to sarcasm appropriate only to the most flippant and amusing of liars.

The fact appears to be that a set of emissaries, for the most part broken-down soldiers and copper-captains, were employed by the minor pamphleteers to ferret out the news of the town. The guiding principle of these newsfactors was that "ink must furnish ale and threepenny ordinaries;" their practice in a dearth of news was to concoct letters from "an eminent Jew merchant in Germany," and the like, or to write true relations of portentous events in distant country-towns. Their classical learning, though only hanging to them in shreds, easily taught them how cattle might be made to speak, blood to rain in showers, and armies to be seen fighting in the air. Timperley cites, from one of these emissaries, an account of the lovely mermaid, cast on the shore at Greenwich by the late high wind, with her comb in one hand and looking-glass in the other. In dull times it must have been difficult for an honest man to fill his book of news, and we are told of some amusing shifts to which publishers were driven. Some in despair would leave a column blank; others filled up the space with extracts from standard works; on this principle a bookseller is said to have published in his journal the whole book of Psalms and half of the New Testament. A newspaper of a later date points out the advantages of the plan, and remarks that people may thus be enticed to read, "who would be frightened at a large volume." The plodding men who followed Butter in establishing the newspapers have received the blame which is honestly due to the concocters of bubble-broadsheets; we suspect, moreover,

that a dislike of free printing caused their influence to be exaggerated; the country was not so benighted as to be thrown "into a state of feverish excitement" by these stories of a cock and a bull.

After the death of Gustavus Adolphus the thirst for continental intelligence was much assuaged, though Butter still prospered under the style of Butter and Company. A few unimportant periodicals, such as the *Young Gallant's Whirligig*, &c., made their appearance, but it was not until the outbreak of the Civil War that Butter's idea received any great development. One or two "grand journals" and "perfect relations" were printed in the year 1642; and on the 1st of January, after the King's retirement to winter quarters at Oxford, the *Mercurius Aulicus* was issued, under the patronage of Charles himself. The anxiety felt by the Cavaliers throughout the country for news of the Court was as keen as the excitement which, twenty years before, had driven the public to Butter's office for information about the Emperor, the Grand Seignior, and the Protestant hero of the north. The news-letter, slowly rotating through half a shire before the arrival of its successor, was felt to be quite unequal to the new demand: and the court journal immediately became the progenitor of a swarm of mercuries, diurnals, and nocturnals, of every colour in politics, and every grotesque variety of title. Within the next two years we find notices of journals with such headings as *Mercurius Fumigosus*, *Vapulans*, *Aulicomastix*, and others which would have made Quintilian stare and gasp. Others, as the *Scotch Dove*, (which professed to bear *news* of the King) the *Kite*, *Vulture*, and *Screech Owl*, were content with their own language; while one journalist came forth under the hybrid title of "*Mercurius, not Veridicus, nor yet Mutus, but Cambro—or honest Britannus.*" We find also something ludicrous in the title of *Aulicus: his hue and cry after Britannicus*, 1645, when we learn that the respective editors of *Aulicus* and *Britannicus* were at that time "bed-fellows in the Fleet Prison."

The court news thus started by the King was edited by Birkenhead, then a fellow of All Souls, to whom probably we owe the fortunate circumstance that a fine collection of early newspapers is preserved in the library of that college. He discharged his functions so well that his election was procured to the chair of moral philosophy, from which in due time he was expelled as a black malignant by the Presbyterian visitors. We owe him some respect as the true father of party newspapers, but his connection with the press has been almost fatal to his reputation: his biographers allow him a turn for raillery and buffoonery, but assert that in prosperity the baseness of his spirit appeared, and that as licenser of the press after the Restoration he neglected all his old associates. At any rate we cannot deny that he was industrious, since, like Marat with *L'Ami du Peuple*, he wrote the whole of his newspaper himself. The joke used to run, according to Anthony à Wood, that the King's party made a weekly assessment of wit and news on the heads of the houses in Oxford, as if, having taken all their plate, he must needs have their brains as well; but this was a calumny. We must now describe the fortunes of another

Oxonian, a clever journalist in our opinion, but in that of his biographers a "most mutable, most seditious and reviling author." Marchmont Needham had tired of half-a-dozen professions between leaving college and becoming an attorney's clerk in Gray's Inn. His attention was caught by the success of the King's newspaper and other journals which were being published at Oxford, and he forthwith dashed into notice with an opposition print, the sarcastic *Mercurius Britannicus*, in August, 1648. He soon became the idol of the London mob, but being disappointed at the rigour and disfavour with which the Puritans treated the press, he took the occasion of some sudden affront to go to Hampton Court and beg the king's pardon on his knees for his opposition. This was in 1647, in which year he began to publish *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, dealing especially with news from Westminster, and being full of witty abuse of the Presbyterian party. After the king's death Needham was reckless enough to publish another "Mercury for King Charles the Second," instead of rushing to the popular side, as he would have done, if he had been the political chameleon described by his biographers. For this obdurate clinging to the royal cause, Needham was laid in Newgate and condemned to death. The Independents were then in want of a smart writer against the Presbyterians, and Needham was only too glad to save his life by scourging the declining faction weekly in Cromwell's Mercury, the *Politicus*. After the Protector's death, his old enemies procured his removal from the post of parliamentary intelligencer, and he went abroad, finally purchasing a general pardon, like the rest of the world, after the Restoration.

Needham is often taken as a representative journalist of those times, and writers, even of Disraeli's eminence, have vilified him in the most unmeasured terms. We are told, that "this patriarch of newspaper writers was a man of versatile talents and still more versatile politics: a bold adventurer, and the most successful, because the most profligate, of his tribe." But the only real evidence of this versatile profligacy is the fact that he left the royal cause when it was hopeless, and when only the choice remained to him of being hanged as a needless martyr, or of undertaking to write against the Presbyterians, of whom he had been all his life the consistent enemy. Disraeli, at any rate, was mistaken, when he wrote thus of Needham's conduct in 1649: "our mercurial writer became once more a virulent Presbyterian." He seems, indeed, to have had an impartial feeling of detestation for the journalists on both sides, since, after thus gibbeting Needham, he remarks, that the royalists were not without "their Needham" in the hard-working and consistent Birkenhead, whom we have before described.

The next personage of importance in the history of newspapers is that prince of partisans, Roger L'Estrange, who, by his unswerving attachment to the royal cause, is said to have earned the esteem of Cromwell himself. He is remarkable for having been the writer of the best newspapers which appeared before the age of Queen Anne, and, at the same time, a most bitter enemy to the freedom of the press. He was appointed licenser of

ensor in 1688, and in the same year was given authority to publish all newspapers, periodicals, and pamphlets, not exceeding two sheets in size. He appears to have looked upon his newspaper as a noxious thing, suffered to exist only that an income might be created for him in return for the labour of purging the press. Yet he spared no pains to make his *Public Intelligencer* readable, and if we may trust his letters now preserved at the State Paper Office, expended in the first year more than 500*l.* on "spyes for collecting intelligence." Three years afterwards he estimated the profits at 400*l.* a year. Nothing can show better the surly contempt of L'Estrange for the newspaper system, of which he was one of the chief founders, than the audacious prospectus contained in the first number of the *Public Intelligencer*. After stating that his Majesty has been pleased to commit the privilege of publishing all intelligence to him, he thus addresses his humble and expectant public:—"As to the point of printed intelligence, I do declare myself (as I hope I may in a matter left so absolutely indifferent) that, supposing the press in order, the people in their right wits, and news or no news to be the question, a public Mercury should never have my vote: because I think it makes the multitude too familiar with the actions and counsels of their superiors, too pragmatistical and censorious, and gives them not only an inch, but a kind of colourable right and licence to be meddling with the government. All which doth not yet hinder, but that at this juncture a paper of that quality may be both safe and expedient . . . so that upon the main I perceive the thing requisite, and for aught I can see yet once a week may do the business, for I intend to utter my news by weight, and not by measure. Yet if I shall find, when my hand is in, and after the planting and securing of correspondents, that the matter will fairly furnish more, I shall keep myself free to double at pleasure."

L'Estrange's correspondence with Lord Arlington shows that he worked very hard at making his newspaper a good thing of its kind. He sent paid correspondents, or "spies" as they were called, to all parts of the country, and even induced some respectable persons, under promise of concealing their names, to contribute occasional paragraphs; these persons were for the most part repaid by sending to them their newspapers and letters free of postage. Another set of "spies" was employed in picking up the news of the town on Paul's Walk or in the taverns and coffee-houses. L'Estrange printed about sixteen reams of his *Intelligencer* weekly, which were, for the most part sold by the mercury-women who cried them about the streets. One Mrs. Andrews is said to have taken more than one-third of the whole quantity printed. These hawkers and newswomen were a great trouble to L'Estrange, because, as he said, "under countenance of their employment is carried on the private trade of treasonous and seditious libels;" we find accordingly that he was continually bribing them into good behaviour. Each of them received forty shillings and several quires of newspapers as yearly wages, and they were all taken by L'Estrange himself to an annual dinner at Hornsey, "with coaches there and back." During the prevalence of the plague it was very hard to conduct a newspaper at

all. The best customers had gone with the Court to Oxford, and L'Estrange had the further misfortune of losing eighty of his printers and workmen by the disease. He did not himself leave his post, but worked so energetically that the circulation of the *Intelligencer*, notwithstanding the plague, was increasing rapidly at the time when the favour of the Court deserted him. Advantage was taken of a slip in the weekly intelligence to deprive L'Estrange of his monopoly in favour of the new *Oxford Gazette*, published in the winter of 1665 and transferred to London in the ensuing spring. The *Gazette* was placed under the control of Williamson, then a rising under-Secretary of State, under whose austere influence nothing was suffered to appear which could excite or even amuse the public. The salaries of the "mercury-women" were rigorously cut down, and the annual feast at Hornsey abolished; a small sum was offered to L'Estrange as compensation for the loss of his monopoly, which had been created by letters-patent. His lamentations were terrible, and so persistent that Williamson had at last to threaten that "Mr. L'Estrange should be prohibited." His letters to Lord Arlington are full of complaints that the newspaper had only just then begun to pay, and that these small profits were his sole reward for spending his private fortune in the royal cause, and for the labour of purging the license of the press: "after all this," he writes, "I am marked out for beggary, infamy, and briefly the worst that can befall an honest man, but God's will and his Majesty's be done." He continued for some years to do odd literary jobs for the Court, and was particularly useful in ridiculing the accusations brought against its Popish tendencies; this he did in his *Observer*, a weekly paper which appeared in 1681, in the form of questions and answers. By this course of procedure he much offended the Romanising clergy, who abused him roundly as an "affected and meddling coxcomb." He died in 1704, and was the object of the following rapturous eulogy:—

Alive distinguished for unshaken truth,
In old age injured, and traduced in youth,—
Thy rising glory shines above our reach,
To dare the impotence of human speech.

Hail, bright unbodied being! gone from hence
To be all intellectual eye and sense,
To reign with martyrs and with kings dethroned,
Rewarded for that cause the just have owned.

—with a good deal more in the same strain of fustian eloquence. L'Estrange has not been a favourite with historians, and we confess that his harsh measures towards the press are apt to raise a feeling of repugnance. He is accused, too, of corrupting the English language by the roughness of his style, having been "anxious to accommodate it exactly to the taste of the common people." But he was certainly an enthusiastic and industrious writer, who raised the tone of the press, even while taking pains to fetter its liberty. When he lost his monopoly, that era of desolation began which Macaulay has so forcibly described. The newspapers became completely sterile, omitting events even of such importance as the trial of the seven bishops, and were supplanted in popular favour by the manuscript newsletters, which were, in fact, the only journals of importance. On the day after the abdication of James II. three fresh newspapers appeared, and many

more burst out after the appearance of the official journal under the style of the *Orange Gazette*. But it was not until 1694 that the king was induced to abolish the censorship and to permit free trade in news; "he doubted much," says Hume, "of the salutary effects of such unlimited freedom."

The newspapers increased and multiplied exceedingly for the eighteen years between the abolition of the office of licenser and the passing of the Stamp Act, in 1712, by which a halfpenny tax was laid on every half-sheet of intelligence. Swift has described for us, in a letter to Stella, the horror and alarm which fell on the literary world when three-quarters of the weekly authors were thus cashiered by Act of Parliament. "Do you know that Grub-street is dead and gone last week? No more ghosts and murders for love or money. I plied it close the last fortnight, and published at least seven newspapers of my own besides several of other people's; and now every half-sheet pays a halfpenny to the Queen. The *Observateur* is fallen, the *Medleys* are jumbled together with the *Flying Post*, the *Examiner* is deadly sick; the *Spectator* keeps up, and doubles its price—I know not how long it will last." The town fortunately did not yet lose its daily "twopennyworth of wit and instruction," and all persons of sensibility were still able to enjoy the flow of Addison's perfect English, as they sipped their morning dishes of the finest "milk Bohee."

We do not profess in this brief sketch to have completely rehabilitated the characters of those who, in the seventeenth century, founded the mighty system of our newspapers. But, at least, we have shown that a vast deal of unreasoning prejudice against them has existed, even in the minds of scholars and philosophers. Butler was not such a fantastic liar, nor Needham such an unprincipled turncoat, as the chroniclers of the movement have asserted. Birkenhead and Roger L'Estrange, though rough in their literary manners, were hard-working, hard-hitting partisans of a kind that even now is not to be despised. Many causes contributed, as we have seen, to form this prejudice. The penal laws, doubtless, had an effect in deterring quiet and contemplative authors from meddling with the dangerous trade of journalism: they would not risk the pillory for the chance of scathing a minister. Another cause of dislike to the cheap journals was the idea that news could not be collected without having recourse to those persons whom we call correspondents and special commissioners, but who were then called spies and informers. There were, besides, two notable bugbears, which have hardly been driven away by the light of our modern civilisation: the one is the notion that a cheap press must be the spring and engine of revolution; the other is the fastidious feeling which may best be described in the words of its most learned exponent, that a chaste genius will banish the painful subject of politics from his elegant pages: "the writer in polite letters felt himself degraded by sinking into the diurnal narrator of political events, which so frequently originate in rumours and party fictions."



- HAVE YOU A SWEETHEART, GRETCHEN? "

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

AUGUST, 1868.

The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER LVI.

AT LADY AUGUSTA'S.



THE Count Pracontal, my lady," said a very grave-looking groom of the chambers, as Lady Augusta sat watching a small golden squirrel swinging by his tail from the branch of a camelia tree.

"Say I am engaged, Hislop—particularly engaged. I do not receive—or, wait: tell him I am much occupied, but, if he is quite sure his visit shall not exceed five minutes, he may come in."

Count Pracontal seemed as though the permission had reached his own ears, for he entered almost immediately, and, bowing deeply and deferentially, appeared to wait leave to advance further into the room.

"Let me have my chocolate, Hislop;" and, as the man withdrew, she pointed to a chair, and said, "There. When did you come back?"

Pracontal, however, had dropped on his knee before her, and pressed her hand to his lips with a fervid devotion, saying, "How I have longed and waited for this moment."

"I shall ring the bell, sir, if you do not be seated immediately. I asked when you returned?"

"An hour ago, my lady—less than an hour ago. I did not dare to write; and then, I wished to be myself the bearer of my own good news."

"What good news are these?"

"That I have, if not won my suit, secured the victory. The registries have been discovered—found in the very spot indicated in the journal. The entries are complete; and nothing is wanting to establish the legality of the marriage. Oh, I entreat you, do not listen to me so coldly. You know well for what reason I prize this success. You know well what gives its brightest lustre in my eyes."

"Pray be narrative now—the emotional can be kept for some other time. Who says that this means success?"

"My lawyer, Mr. Kelson. He calls the suit won. He proves his belief, for he has advanced me money to pay off my debt to Longworth, and to place me in a position of ease and comfort."

"And what is Kelson—is he one of the judges?"

"Of course not. He is one of the leading solicitors of London; a very grave, thoughtful, cautious man. I have shown you many of his letters. You must remember him."

"No; I never remember people; that is, if they have not personally interested me. I think you have grown thin. You look as if you had been ill."

"I have fretted a good deal—worried myself; and my anxiety about you has made me sleepless and feverish."

"About me! Why, I was never better in my life."

"Your looks say as much; but I meant my anxiety to lay my tidings at your feet, and with them myself and my whole future."

"You may leave the chocolate there, Hislop," as the man entered with a tray; "unless Count Pracontal would like some."

"Thanks, my lady," said he, bowing his refusal.

"You are wrong then," said she, as the servant withdrew. "Hislop makes it with the slightest imaginable flavour of the cherry laurel; and it is most soothing. Isn't he a love?"

"Hislop?"

"No, my darling squirrel yonder. The poor dear has been ill these two days. He bit Sir Marcus Cluff, and that horrid creature seems to have disagreed with the dear, for he has pined ever since. Don't caress him—he hates men, except Monsignore Alberti, whom, probably, he mistakes for an old lady. And what becomes of all the Bramleighs—are they left penniless?"

"By no means. I do not intend to press my claim farther than the right to the estates. I am not going to proceed for—I forget the legal word—the accumulated profits. Indeed, if Mr. Bramleigh be only animated by the spirit I have heard attributed to him, there is no concession that I am not disposed to make him."

"What droll people Frenchmen are! They dash their morality, like their cookery, with something discrepant. They fancy it means 'piquancy.' What, in the name of all romance, have you to do with the Bramleighs? Why all this magnanimity for people who certainly have been keeping you out of what was your own, and treating your claim to it as a knavery?"

"You might please to remember that we are related."

"Of course you are nothing of the kind. If *you* be the true prince, the others must be all illegitimate a couple of generations back. Perhaps I am embittered against them by that cruel fraud practised on myself. I cannot bring myself to forgive it. Now, if you really were that fine generous creature you want me to believe, it is of *me*, of *me*, Lady Augusta Bramleigh, you would be thinking all this while: how to secure *me* that miserable pittance they called my settlement; how to recompense *me* for the fatal mistake I made in my marriage; how to distinguish between the persons who fraudulently took possession of your property, and the poor harmless victim of their false pretensions."

"And is not this what I am here for? Is it not to lay my whole fortune at your feet?"

"A very pretty phrase, that doesn't mean anything like what it pretends: a phrase borrowed from a vaudeville, and that ought to be restored to where it came from."

"Lord and Lady Culduff, my lady, wish to pay their respects."

"They are passing through," said Lady Augusta, reading the words written in pencil on the card presented by the servant. "Of course I must see them. You needn't go away, Count; but I shall not present you. Yes, Hislop, tell her ladyship I am at home. I declare you are always compromising me. Sit over yonder, and read your newspaper, or play with Felice."

She had barely finished these instructions when the double door was flung wide, and Marion swept proudly in. Her air and toilette were both queenlike, and, indeed, her beauty was not less striking than either. Lord Culduff followed, a soft pleasant smile on his face. It might do service in many ways, for it was equally ready to mean sweetness or sarcasm, as occasion called for.

When the ladies had kissed twice, and his lordship had saluted Lady Augusta with a profound respect, dashed with a sort of devotion, Marion's eyes glanced at the stranger, who, though he arose, and only reseated himself as they sat down, neither lifted his glance nor seemed to notice them further.

"We are only going through; we start at two o'clock," said she, hurriedly.

"At one-forty, my lady," said Lord Culduff, with a faint smile, as though shocked at being obliged to correct her.

"It was so kind of you to come," said Lady Augusta; "and you only arrived this morning?"

"We only arrived half an hour ago."

"I must order you some lunch ; I'm sure you can eat something."

"My lady is hungry ; she said so as we came along," said Lord Culduff. "Allow me to ring for you. As for myself, I take Liebig's lozenges and a spoonful of Curaçoa—nothing else—before dinner."

"It's so pleasant to live with people who are 'dieted,' " said Marion, with a sneering emphasis on the word.

"So I hear from Bramleigh," interposed Lord Culduff, "that this man—I forget his name—actually broke into the house at Castello, and carried away a quantity of papers."

"My lord, as your lordship is so palpably referring to me, and as I am quite sure you are not aware of my identity, may I hasten to say I am Count Pracontal de Bramleigh?"

"Oh, dear ! have I forgotten to present you ?" said Lady Augusta, with a perfect simplicity of manner.

Marion acknowledged the introduction by the slightest imaginable bow and a look of cold defiance ; while Lord Culduff smiled blandly, and professed his regret if he had uttered a word that could occasion pain.

"Love and war are chartered libertines, and why not law ?" said the viscount. "I take it that all stratagems are available ; the great thing is, they should be successful."

"Count Pracontal declares that he can pledge himself to the result," said Lady Augusta. "The case, in fact, as he represents it, is as good as determined."

"Has a jury decided, then ?" asked Culduff.

"No, my lord ; the trial comes on next term. I only repeat the assurance given me by my lawyer ; and so far confirmed by him that he has made me large advances, which he well knows I could not repay if I should not gain my cause."

"These are usually cautious people," said the viscount, gravely.

"It strikes me," said Marion, rising, "that this sort of desultory conversation on a matter of such importance is, to say the least, inconvenient. Even the presence of this gentleman is not sufficient to make me forget that my family have always regarded his pretension as something not very far from a fraud."

"I regret infinitely, madam," said Pracontal, bowing low, "that it is not a man has uttered the words just spoken."

"Lady Culduff's words, sir, are all mine," said Lord Culduff.

"I thank your lordship from my heart for the relief you have afforded me."

"There must be nothing of this kind," said Lady Augusta, warmly. "If I have been remiss in not making Count Pracontal known to you before, let me repair my error by presenting him now as a gentleman who makes me the offer of his hand."

"I wish you good morning," said Marion. "No, thank you ; no luncheon. Your ladyship has given me fully as much for digestion as I care for. Good-by."

"If my congratulations could only shadow forth a vision of all the happiness I wish your ladyship," began Lord Culduff—

"I think I know, my lord, what you would say," broke she in, laughingly. "You would like to have uttered something very neat on well-assorted unions. There could be no better authority on such a subject; but Count Pracontal is toleration itself: he lets me tell my friends that I am about to marry him for money, just as I married poor Colonel Bramleigh for love."

"I am waiting for you, my lord. We have already trespassed too far on her ladyship's time and occupations." The sneering emphasis on the last word was most distinct. Lord Culduff kissed Lady Augusta's hand with a most devoted show of respect, and slowly retired.

As the door closed after them, Pracontal fell at her feet, and covered her hand with kisses.

"There, there, Count; I have paid a high price for that piece of impertinence I have just uttered; but when I said it, I thought it would have given her an apoplexy."

"But you are mine—you are my own!"

"Nous en parlerons. The papers are full of breaches of promise; and if you want me to keep mine, you'll not make it odious to me by tormenting me about it."

"But, my lady, I have a heart; a heart that would be broken by a betrayal."

"What a strange heart for a Frenchman! About as suitable to the Boulevards Italiens as snow-shoes to the tropics. Monsieur de Pracontal," said she, in a much graver tone, "please to bear in mind that *I* am a very considerable item in such an arrangement as we spoke of. The *whole* question is not what would make *you* happy."

Pracontal bowed low in silence; his gesture seemed to accept her words as a command to be obeyed, and he did not utter a syllable.

"Isn't she handsome?" cried she, at length. "I declare, Count, if one of your countrywomen had a single one of the charms of that beautiful face she'd be turning half the heads in Europe; and Marion can do nothing with them all, except drive other women wild with envy."

CHAPTER LVII.

AT THE INN AT CATTARO.

WHEN L'Estrange had carried off Jack Bramleigh to the inn, and had seen him engaged with an excellent breakfast, he despatched a messenger to the villa to say that he was not to be expected home by dinner-time, but would be back to tea "with a friend," for whom he begged Gusty Bramleigh's room might be prepared.

I shall not delay to chronicle all the doubt, the discussion, and the guessing that the note occasioned; the mere fact that George had ventured

to issue an order of this kind without first consulting Julia, investing the step with a degree of mysteriousness perfectly inscrutable. I turn, however, to Cattaro, where L'Estrange and Jack sat together, each so eager to hear the other's tidings as to be almost too impatient to dwell upon himself.

To account for their presence in this remote spot, George, as briefly as he could, sketched the course of events at Castello, not failing to lay due stress on the noble and courageous spirit with which Augustus and Nelly had met misfortune. "All is not lost yet," said L'Estrange; "far from it; but even if the worst should come, I do not know of two people in the world who will show a stouter front to adversity."

"And your sister, where is she?" said Jack, in a voice scarce above a whisper.

"Here—at the villa."

"Not married?"

"No. I believe she has changed less than any of us. She is just what you remember her."

It was not often that L'Estrange attempted anything like adroitness in expression, but he did so here, and saw, in the heightened colour and sparkling eye of the other, how thoroughly his speech had succeeded.

"I wonder will she know me," said Jack, after a pause. "You certainly did not at first."

"Nor, for that matter, did *you* recognize *me*."

"Ah, but I did though," said Jack, passing his hand over his brow, "but I had gone through so much, and my head was so knocked about, I couldn't trust that my senses were not deceiving me, and I thought if I make any egregious blunder now, these people will set me down for mad. That was the state I was in the whole time you were questioning me. I promise you it was no small suffering while it lasted."

"My poor fellow, what trials you must have gone through to come to this. Tell me by what mischance you were at Ischia."

With all a sailor's frankness, and with a modesty in speaking of his own achievements just as sailor-like, Jack told the story of the storm at Naples.

"I had no thought of breaking the laws," said he, bluntly. "I saw ships foundering, and small craft turning keel uppermost; on every side of me there was disaster and confusion everywhere. I had no time to inquire about the morals of the men I saw clinging to hencoops or holding on by stretchers. I saved as many as I could, and sorry enough I was to have seen many go down before I could get near them; and I was fairly beat when it was all over, or perhaps they'd not have captured me so easily. At all events," said he, after a minute's silence, "they might have let me off with a lighter sentence, but my temper got the better of me in court, and when they asked me if it was not true that I made greater efforts to save the galley-slaves than the soldiery, I told them it might have been so, for the prisoners, shamed and handcuffed as they were, went down like brave men, while the royal troops yelled and screamed like a set of arrant

cowards, and that whenever I pulled one of the wretches out of the water, I was half ashamed of my own humanity. That speech settled me, at least the lawyer said so, and declared he was afraid to say a word more in defence of a man that insulted the tribunal and the nation together."

"And what was your sentence?"

"Death, commuted to the galleys for life; worse than any death! It's not the hardship or the labour, I mean. A sailor goes through more downright hard work on a blowy night than these fellows do in a year. It is the way a man brutalises when vice and crime make up the whole atmosphere of his life. The devil has a man's heart all his own, whenever hope deserts it, and you want to do wickedness just because it is wickedness. For three weeks before I made my escape it was all I could do not to dash the turnkey's brains out when he made his night round. I told my comrade—the man I was chained to—what I felt, and he said, 'We all go through that at first, but when you're some years here you'll not care for that or anything.' I believe it was the terror of coming to that condition made me try to escape. I don't know that I ever felt the same ecstasy of delight that I felt as I found myself swimming in that fresh cold sea in the silence of a calm starry night. I'm sure it will be a memory that will last my lifetime. I thought of you all—I thought of long ago, of our happy evenings, and I pictured to my mind the way we used to sit around the fire, and I wondered what had become of my place: was I ever remembered, was I spoken of; could it be that at that very moment some one was asking, where was poor Jack? And how I wished you might all know that my last thoughts were upon you, that it was the dear old long ago was before me to the last. I was seventeen hours in the water. When they picked me up I was senseless from a sun-stroke, for the corks floated me long after I gave up swimming. I was so ill when I landed that I went to hospital; but there was little care given to the sick, and I left it when I was able to walk, and came on here. Talk of luck, but I ask you was there ever such a piece of fortune befell a man?"

L'Estrange could not speak as he gazed on the poor fellow, over whose worn and wasted features joy had lighted up a look of delight that imparted an almost angelic elevation to his face.

"But can I go back like this?" asked he, sorrowfully, as he looked down at his ragged clothes and broken shoes.

"I have thought of all that. There is nothing to be had here ready but Montenegrin costume, so the landlord tells me, and you will have to figure in something very picturesque."

"Cannot I get a sailor's jacket and trousers?"

"Ay, of Dalmatian cut and colour, but they'll not become you as well as that green velvet attila and the loose hose of the mountaineer. Try if you can't take a sleep now, and when you awake you'll find your new rig in that room yonder, where there's a bath ready for you. I'll go down the town meanwhile, and do a few commissions, and will set out homewards when you're rested."

"I wish it was over," said Jack, with a sigh.

"Wish what was over?"

"I mean I wish the shock was over. The shock of seeing me such an object as I am! Sickness changes a man quite enough, but there's worse than that, George. I know what this rough life of mine must have made of me. You won't say it, old fellow, but I see it in your sad face all the same. I am—say it out, man—I am a most disreputable-looking blackguard!"

"I declare, on my honour, that, except the ravages of illness, I see no change in you whatever."

"Look here," said Jack, as his voice trembled with a peculiar agitation, "I'll see Nelly first. A man's sister can never be ashamed of him, come what will. If Nelly shows—and she's not one to hide it—that—no matter, I'll not say more about it. I see you're not pleased with me laying stress on such a matter."

"No, no, you wrong me, Jack; you wrong me altogether. My poor fellow, we never were—we never had such good reason to be proud of you as now. You are a hero, Jack. You've done what all Europe will ring with."

"Don't talk baldordash; my head is weak enough already. If you're not ashamed of the tatterdemalion that comes back to you, it's more than I deserve. There now, go off, and do your business, and don't be long, for I'm growing very impatient to see them. Give me something to smoke till you come back, and I'll try and be calm and reasonable by that time."

If L'Estrange had really anything to do in the town he forgot all about it, and trotted about from street to street, so full of Jack and his adventures that he walked into apple-stalls and kicked over egg-baskets amid the laughter and amusement of the people.

If he had told no more than the truth in saying that Jack was still like what he had been, there were about him signs of suffering and hardship that gave a most painful significance to his look, and more painful than even these was the poor fellow's consciousness of his fallen condition. The sudden pauses in speaking, the deep sighs that would escape him, the almost bitter raillery he used when speaking of himself, all showed how acutely he felt his altered state.

L'Estrange was in nowise prepared for the change half an hour had made in Jack's humour. The handsome dress of Montenegro became him admirably, and the sailor-like freedom of his movements went well with the easy costume. "Isn't this a most appropriate transformation, George?" he cried out. "I came in here looking like a pickpocket, and I go out like a stage bandit!"

"I declare it becomes you wonderfully. I'll wager the girls will not let you wear any other dress."

"Ay, but my toilet is not yet completed. See what a gorgeous scarf I've got here—green and gold, and with a gold fringe that will reach to my boots, and the landlord insists on lending me his own silver-mounted sabre. I say, old fellow, have you courage to go through the town with me?"

"You forget you are in the last fashion of the place ; if they stare at you now, it will be approvingly."

"What's the distance ? Are we to walk ?"

"Walk or drive, as you like best. On foot we can do it in an hour."

"On foot be it then ; for though I am very impatient to see them, I have much to ask you about."

As they issued from the inn, it was, as L'Estrange surmised, to meet a most respectful reception from the townsfolk, who regarded Jack as a mountaineer chief of rank and station. They uncovered and made way for him as he passed, and from the women especially came words of flattering admiration at his handsome looks and gallant bearing.

"Are they commenting on the ass in the lion's skin ?" said Jack, in a sly whisper ; "is that what they are muttering to each other ?"

"Quite the reverse. It is all in extravagant praise of you. The police are on the alert, too : they think there must be mischief brewing in the mountains, that has brought a great chief down to Cattaro."

Thus chatting and laughing they gained the outskirts of the town, and soon found themselves on one of the rural paths which led up the mountain.

"Don't think me very stupid, George, or very tiresome," said Jack, "if I ask you to go over again what you told me this morning. Such strange things have befallen me of late that I can scarcely distinguish between fact and fancy. Now, first of all, have we lost Castello—and who owns it ?"

"No. The question is yet to be decided ; the trial will take place in about two months."

"And if we are beaten, does it mean that we are ruined ? Does it sweep away Marion and Nelly's fortunes, too ?"

"I fear so. I know little accurately, but I believe the whole estate is involved in the claim."

"Gusty bears it well, you say ?"

"Admirably. I never saw a man behave with such splendid courage."

"I'll not ask about Nelly, for I could swear for *her* pluck. She was always the best of us."

If L'Estrange drank in this praise with ecstasy, he had to turn away his head, lest the sudden flush that covered his face should be observed.

"I have no wish to hear the story of this claim now ; you shall tell it to me some other time. But just tell me, was it ever heard of in my father's time ?"

"I believe so. Your father knew of it, but did not deem it serious."

"Marion, of course, despises it still ; and what does Temple say ?"

"One scarcely knows. I don't think they have had a letter from him since they left Ireland."

"See what a wise fellow I was !" cried he, laughing. "I sank so low in life, that any change must be elevation. You are all great folk to me !"

There was a long and painful pause after this—each deep in his own

thoughts. At last Jack asked suddenly, "How is Marion? Is she happy in her marriage?"

"We hear next to nothing of her; the newspapers tell us of her being at great houses and in fine company, but we know no more."

"Of course she's happy then. When she was a child, she would only play with us if we made her a queen; and though we often tried to rebel,—we were great levellers in our way,—she always kept us down, and whether we liked it or not, we had to admit the sovereignty."

"Your younger sister"—he did not call her Nelly—"was not of this mould?"

"Not a bit of it; she was the peace-maker, always on the side of the weak, and though she was a delicate child, she'd fight against oppression with the passion of a tigress. Wasn't it strange?" said he after a pause. "There we were, five of us, treated and reared exactly alike; in early life certainly there were no distinctions made, nor any favouritism practised. We were of the same race and blood, and yet no two of us were alike. Temple had perhaps some sort of resemblance to Marion, but he had not her bold daring spirit. Where she was courageous, he'd have been crafty. Whatever good there was amongst us, Nelly had it."

Another and longer pause now succeeded. "I say, George," cried Jack at last, "how do you mean to break it to the girls that I'm here? I take it, poor Nelly's nerves must have suffered sorely of late. Is she likely to stand a shock without injury?"

"It is exactly what I'm trying to resolve this moment. Flushed with the walk, and cheered by the fresh air, you don't look sickly now."

"Ah, my dear fellow, that's not the worst of it. It is the sight of me as recalling my fallen fortune,—that's what I fear for her; her last goodbye to me was blended with joy at my promotion—I was going to take up my command! She has never seen me since my disgrace."

"Don't call it that, Jack; we all know there is no other blame attaches to you than rashness."

"When rashness can make a man forget his condition, it's bad enough; but I'll not go back to these things. Tell me how I am to meet her."

"Perhaps it would be best I should first see Julia, and tell her you are here. I always like to ask her advice."

"I know that of old," said Jack with a faint smile.

"I'll leave you in the summer-house at the end of the garden there, till I speak with Julia."

"Not very long, I hope?"

"Not an instant; she never requires a minute to decide on what to do: follow me now along this path, and I'll place you in your ambush. You'll not leave it till I come."

"What a lovely spot this seems, it beats Castallo hollow!"

"So we say every day. We all declare we'd like to pass our lives here."

"Let me be one of the party, and I'll say nothing against the project," said Jack, as he brushed through a hedge of sweet-briar, and descended a little slope, at the foot of which a shady summer-house stood guardian over a well. "Remember now," cried he, "not to tax my patience too far. I'll give you ten minutes, but I won't wait twenty."

L'Estrange lost no time in hastening back to the house. Julia, he heard, was giving orders about the room for the stranger, and he found her actively engaged in the preparation. "For whom am I taking all this trouble, George?" said she, as he entered.

"Guess, Julia, guess! Whom would you say was best worth it?"

"Not Mr. Cutbill,—whom Nelly fixed on,—not Sir Marcus Cluff, whose name occurred to myself, not even the Pretender Count Pracontal; and now I believe I have exhausted the category of possible guests."

"Not any of these," said he, drawing her to his side. "Where is Nelly?"

"She went down to gather some roses."

"Not in the lower garden, I hope?" cried he, eagerly.

"Wherever she could find them best—but why not there? and what do you mean by all this mystery?"

"Go and fetch her here at once," cried he. "If she should see him suddenly, the shock might do her great harm."

"See whom? see whom?" exclaimed she wildly. "Don't torture me this way!"

"Jack, her brother, Jack Bramleigh." And he proceeded to tell how he had found him, and in what condition: but she heard nothing of it all, for she had sunk down on a seat, and sat sobbing with her hands over her face; then suddenly wiping the tears away, she rose up, and while her voice trembled with each word, she said—"Is he changed, George? is he greatly changed?"

"Changed! yes, for he has been ill, and gone through all manner of hardships, and now he is dressed like a Montenegro chief, for we could get no other clothes, so that you'll scarcely know him."

"Let us find Nelly at once," said she, moving towards the door. "Come, George,—come," and she was down the stairs, and across the hall, and out of the door, before he could follow her. In her agitated manner, and rapid expression, it was evident she was endeavouring to subdue the deep emotion of her heart, and by seeming to be occupied to suppress the signs of that blended joy and sorrow which rack the nature more fatally than downright misery.

"See, George, look there!" cried she wildly, as she pointed down a straight alley, at the top of which they were standing. "There they are. Nelly has her arm round him. They have met, and it is all over;" and so saying, she hid her face on her brother's shoulder, and sobbed heavily; meanwhile the others came slowly forward, too much engaged with each other to notice those in front of them.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE VILLA LIFE.

It is not, at this the eleventh hour of my story, I can stop to dwell on the life of the villa at Cattaro, though I am free to own it was about the sunniest bit of landscape our long journey has offered us.

Seated or lying on the grass, under the shade of a broad-leaved fig-tree, they listened to Jack's adventures, told with a quaint humour, of which they who knew him well could appreciate every shade and tint. In his days of prosperous fortune it was rare to hear him speak of himself: the routine life he led seemed to develop little or nothing of his real nature; but now, dependent as he was altogether on intrinsic qualities for whatever estimation he might obtain, owing nothing to station, it was remarkable how his character had widened and expanded, how his sympathies with his fellow-men had increased. Though nothing could be farther from his nature than any mawkish sentimentality, there was that show of trustfulness, that degree of hopeful belief in the world at large, which occasionally led Julia to banter him on his optimism, and this, be it said passingly, was the only show of freedom between them; their manner to each other from the moment they met being marked by a studied reserve on each side.

"And surely, Prince," said she, calling him by the title which, in honour of his dress, they had given him, "surely you must have met some charming creatures at the galleys. All the good qualities of human nature were not reserved for the cockpit or the steerage, or whatever it is."

"Ay, even at the galleys they weren't all bad, though it's not exactly the sort of place men grow better in. I had a capital old fellow as comrade, and, I take shame to say, I ought to have thought of him before this. I say, George, have you any friends of influence at Naples? I wish I could get my old companion his liberty."

"George has gone in to write to Augustus," said Nelly; "but if Lord Culduff could answer your purpose, I'd ask Marion to interest him in the matter."

"There's a dear good girl, do write a line to Marion; tell her it's the greatest favour she could bestow on me. The poor fellow is a political criminal; he only shot at the king I believe, and where they do that every week or so, it's hard to make it a capital offence. I'll give you his name and his number when I go into the house."

"The post leaves early," said she, rising. "I must do this at once."

"Wait till I have finished this corner of my netting, and I'll go with you," said Julia.

"I say No to that," cried Jack. "I'm not going to be left alone here. If that's the way you treat a distinguished guest, the sooner he takes his leave the better. Stay where you are, Miss Julia."

"But I shall have no work, Master Jack. My net will be finished in a few minutes."

"Make cigarettes for me then. There's the bag," said he, lazily.

"I declare our Bohemianism progresses famously," said she, half tartly. "What do you think of this proposal, Nelly?" The question came late, however, for Nelly was already on her way to the house.

"Don't go, that's a good girl; don't leave me here to my own thoughts—they're not over jolly, I promise you, when I'm all alone."

"Why, it's your good spirits that amaze me," replied she. "I don't remember seeing you so cheerful or so merry long ago, as you are now."

"You mean that I wasn't so happy when I had more reason to be so? but what if I were to tell you out of what a sad heart this joy comes; how every day I say to myself, 'This is to be the last of it.' Not," said he, in a bolder voice, "that I want to think about myself; this terrible disaster that has befallen my family is infinitely worse than anything that could attach to me. Even yet I cannot bring myself to believe this great smash." She made no answer; and he went on: "I can't make out if Nelly herself believes it. You all wear such cheerful faces, it's not easy to understand in what spirit you take this reverse."

"I think that your return has recompensed Nelly for everything."

"She was always the best of us; it's no great praise that same; but I mean—but it's no matter what I mean, for you are laughing at me already."

"No, indeed, I was not. If I smiled it was in thinking how little all your casualties have changed you."

"For that matter I suspect we may compliment or condemn each other, whichever it be, on equal terms."

"So at last I have got you to say a civil thing to me; you tell me I am the same delightful fascinating creature you knew me long ago."

"I said nothing about fascinations," said he, sternly.

"Not directly, of course. Your tact and delicacy were proof against such indiscretion, but you know you meant it."

"I'll tell you what I know: I know that I never saw a girl except yourself who liked to pain—ay, to torture—those who cared for her; who would infinitely rather indulge her mood of mockery than——"

"Pray finish. It's not every day I have the fortune to hear such candour. Tell me what it is that I postpone to my love of sarcasm?"

"I've done. I've been very rude to you, and I ask your pardon. I was not very polished in my best of days, and I take it my late schooling has not done much to improve me. When I was coming here I swore an oath to myself that, no matter what you'd say to me, I'd not lose temper, nor make a resentful answer to anything; and now I see I've forgotten all my good intentions, and the best thing I can do is to ask you to forgive me, and go my ways."

"I'm not offended," said she, calmly, without raising her eyes. "I suppose if the balance were struck between us, I did more to provoke you than you did to wound me."

"What is this I hear about being provoked and wounded?" cried Nelly, coming up to where they sat.

"Your brother and I have been quarrelling, that's all. We thought it the pleasantest way to pass the time till you came back; and we have succeeded to perfection."

"I declare, Julia, this is too bad," cried Nelly.

"But why Julia? Why am I singled out as the culprit? Is he so above reproach that he could not be in the wrong?"

"I know I was in the wrong, and I've said so; but now let Nelly be judge between us. Here is the way it began,——"

"The way what began, pray?" asked Julia.

"There now, that's the way she pushes me to lose my temper, and when she sees I'm angry she grows all the calmer."

"She's downright disagreeable," said Julia; "and I don't know why a frank, outspoken sailor condescends to speak to her."

"Well, he's pretty sure to get the worst of it," muttered he.

"Poor Jack," said Nelly, caressingly. "And for all that he likes the ill treatment better than all the flatteries he meets elsewhere."

"That shrug of his shoulders does not say so," said Julia, laughing. "Come," cried she, with a merry voice, "let us do something more worthy of this delicious morning; let us have a walk up the mountain; we can have shade all the way."

"What's that little dome;—there above the trees?" asked Jack.

"That's the campanile of our little chapel. I'll fetch the key, and we'll go and visit it. We've not been to see it yet."

"But George would like to come with us." And so saying, Julia hastened away to find him.

"Oh, Nelly, I love her better than ever, and she scorns me even more," said he, as he hid his head on his sister's shoulder.

"My poor, dear Jack; how little you know her! You never sorrowed over your last parting as she did. We have had all of us great reverses. They, as well as ourselves; and that spirit of Julia's—there is another name for it than mockery—has carried her through her troubles better than a more pretentious philosophy."

"But she is not even friendly with me, Nelly. None of you make me feel what I have sunk to as she does."

"There again you are unjust——"

"Right or wrong, I'll bear it no longer. I only wait now till Gusty comes back. I want to shake his hand once more, and then, girl, you have seen the last of me."

Before Nelly could reply, Julia and her brother had joined them.

"Here's news," said George, showing a letter. "Augustus will be with us to-morrow; he only writes a few lines to say,—'I have nothing particularly cheering to report, and it will all bear keeping. I mean to be at home on Wednesday next. I am all impatience to see Jack; the thought of meeting him more than repays me my reverses here. Give him my love.—A. BRAMLEIGH.'"

"We shall have plenty to do to prepare for his arrival," said Julia;

"we must postpone our visit to the chapel. Would this illustrious prince condescend to help us to move tables and chests of drawers?"

Jack threw a very significant glance towards Nelly, as though to say, "She is at the old game."

"Well, sir? I wait your answer," said Julia.

"For twenty-four hours I am at your orders," said Jack.

"And then under what commander do you serve?"

"Captain Fortune, I suspect," said he, gravely. "A gentleman, or lady, perhaps, that has shown me no especial fondness up to this."

"Jack says he is going to leave us," said Nelly, as her eyes filled up.

"But why?" cried George.

"But why?" echoed Julia.

"Haven't I given proof enough," said Jack, with a faint laugh, "that I'm not what Miss Julia there calls a very logical animal; that when I get a wayward fancy in my head I follow it as faithfully as if it was a strong conviction. Well, now, one of these moments has come to me; and thinking, besides, that this pleasant sort of life here is not exactly the best preparation for a rougher kind of existence, I have made up my mind to slip my cable after I've seen Gusty."

"Well, then, let us profit by the short time left us," said Julia, quietly.

"Come and help me in the house. I shall want you, too, George."

"You must do without me, Julia; I have only just discovered a letter in my pocket, with the seal unbroken, that I ought to have answered at least a fortnight ago. It is from Sir Marcus Cluff," said he, in a whisper, "making me an offer of the vicarage at Hoxton."

"What a kind fellow."

"Who's a kind fellow?" asked Jack.

"A certain gentleman, who made me the flattering proposal to become his wife and nurse, and who now offers to make George his chaplain."

"It rains good luck here," said Jack, with a half bitter smile; "why won't it drift a little in my direction? By the way, Nelly, what about the letter I asked you to write to Marion?"

"It is written. I only want to fill in the name of the person; you told me to keep a blank for it."

"I'll go and fetch my pocket-book," said he, and broke away at once, and hastened towards the house.

"I'm delighted at your good news, Julia," said Nelly; "though it almost breaks my heart to think how desolate we shall soon be here."

"Never anticipate evil fortune. We are still together, and let us not mar the present by glancing at a possible future."

"And poor Jack," began Nelly; but unable to finish, she turned away her head to hide the emotion she felt.

"He shall,—he must stay," cried Julia.

"You know the price, dearest," said Nelly, throwing herself into her arms.

"Well, who says I am not ready to pay it? There, that's enough of folly. Let us now think of something useful."

CHAPTER LIX.

A VERY BRIEF DREAM.

JULIA was seldom happier than when engaged in preparing for a coming guest. There was a blended romance and fuss about it all that she liked. She liked to employ her fancy in devising innumerable little details, she liked the active occupation itself, and she liked best of all that storied web of thought in which she connected the expected one with all that was to greet him. How he would be pleased with this, what he would think of that? Would he leave that chair or that table where she had placed it? Would he like that seat in the window, and the view down the glen, as she hoped he might? Would the new-comer, in fact, fall into the same train of thought and mind as she had who herself planned and executed all around him.

Thus thinking was it that, with the aid of a stout Dalmatian peasant-girl, she busied herself with preparations for Augustus Bramleigh's arrival. She knew all his caprices about the room he liked to occupy. How he hated much furniture, and loved space and freedom; how he liked a soft and tempered light, and that the view from his window should range over some quiet secluded bit of landscape, rather than take in what recalled life and movement and the haunts of men.

She was almost proud of the way she saw into people's natures by the small dropping preferences they evinced for this or that, and had an intense pleasure in meeting the coming fancy. At the present moment, too, she was glad to busy herself in any mode rather than dwell on the thoughts that the first interval of rest would be sure to bring before her. She saw that Jack Bramleigh was displeased with her, and, though not without some misgivings, she was vexed that he alone of all should resent the capricious moods of a temper resolutely determined to take the sunniest path in existence, and make the smaller worries of life but matter for banter.

"He mistakes me altogether," said she aloud, but speaking to herself, "if he imagines that I'm in love with poverty and all its straits; but I'm not going to cry over them for all that. They may change me in many ways. I can't help that. Want is an ugly old hag, and one cannot sit opposite her without catching a look of her features; but she'll not subdue my courage, nor make me afraid to meet her eye. Here, Gretchen, help me with this great chest of drawers. We must get rid of it out of this, wherever it goes." It was a long and weary task, and tried their strength to the last limit; and Julia threw herself into a deep-cushioned chair when it was over, and sighed heavily. "Have you a sweetheart, Gretchen?" she asked, just to lead the girl to talk, and relieve the oppression that she felt would steal over her. Yes, Gretchen had a sweetheart, and he was a fisherman, and he had a fourth share in a "bragotza;" and when he had saved enough to buy out two of his comrades he was to

marry her; and Gretchen was very fond, and very hopeful, and very proud of her lover, and altogether took a very pleasant view of life, though it was all of it in expectancy. Then Gretchen asked if the signorina had not a sweetheart, and Julia, after a pause—and it was a pause in which her colour came and went—said “No!” And Gretchen drew nigh, and stared at her with her great hazel eyes, and read in her now pale face that the “No” she had uttered had its own deep meaning; for Gretchen, though a mere peasant, humble and illiterate, was a woman, and had a woman’s sensibility under all that outward ruggedness.

“Why do you look at me so, Gretchen?” asked Julia.

“Ah, signorina,” sighed she, “I am sorry—I am very sorry! It is a sad thing not to be loved.”

“So it is, Gretty; but every day is not as nice and balmy and fresh as this, and yet we live on, and, taking one with the other, find life pretty enjoyable, after all!” The casuistry of her speech made no convert. How could it?—it had not any weight with herself.

The girl shook her head mournfully and gazed at her with sad eyes, but not speaking a word. “I thought, signorina,” said she, at last, “that the handsome prince——”

“Go to your dinner, Gretchen. You are late already,” said Julia, sharply, and the girl withdrew, abashed and downcast. When thus alone, Julia sat down, wearied by her late exertions. She leaned her head on the arm of the chair, and fell fast asleep. The soft summer wind that came tempered through the window-blinds played with her hair and fanned her to heavy slumber—at first, dreamless slumber, the price of actual fatigue.

Jack Bramleigh, who had been wandering about alone, doing his best to think over himself and his future, but not making any remarkable progress in the act, had at length turned into the house, strolling from room to room, half unconsciously, half struck by the vastness and extent of the building. Chance at last led him along the corridor which ended in this chamber, and he entered, gazing carelessly around him, till suddenly he thought he heard the deep-drawn breathing of one in heavy sleep. He drew nigh, and saw it was Julia. The arm on which her head lay hung listlessly down, and her hand was half hid in the masses of her luxuriant hair. Noiselessly, stealthily, Jack crept to her feet, and crouched down upon the floor, seeming to drink in her long breathings with an ecstasy of delight. Oh, what a moment was that! Through how many years of life was it to pass; the one bright thread of gold in the dark tissue of existence? As such he knew it; so he felt it; and to this end he treasured up every trait and every feature of the scene. “It is all that I shall soon have to look back upon,” thought he; and yet to be thus near her seemed a bliss of perfect ecstasy.

More than an hour passed over, and he was still there, not daring to move lest he should awake her. At last he thought her lips seemed to murmur something. He bent down close—so close that he felt her breath

on his face. Yes, she was dreaming—dreaming, too, of long ago ; for he hears her mutter the names of places near where they had lived in Ireland. It was of some party of pleasure she was dreaming—her dropping words indicated so much ; and at last she said, “No, no ; not Lisconnor. Jack doesn't like Lisconnor.” Oh, how he blessed her for the words ; and bending down, too, he touched the heavy curl of her hair with his lips. Some passing shock startled her, and she awoke with a start and a faint cry. “Where am I ?” she cried ; “what is this ?” and she stared at him with her wide full glance, while her features expressed terror and bewilderment.

“Don't be frightened, dearest. You are safe, and at home with those who love you.”

“And how are you here ? how came you here ?” asked she, still terrified.

“I was strolling listlessly about, and chance led me here. I saw you asleep in that chair, and I lay down at your feet till you should awake.”

“I know nothing of it all,” muttered she. “I suppose I was dreaming. I fancied I was in Ireland, and we were about to go on some excursion, and I thought Marion was not pleased with me ;—how stupid it is to try and disentangle a dream. You shouldn't have been here, Master Jack. Except in fairy tales, young princes never take such liberties as this, and even then the princesses are under enchantment.”

“It is *I* that am under the spell, not *you*, Julia,” said he fondly.

“Then you are come to ask pardon for all your crossness, your savagery of this morning ?”

“Yes, if you desire it.”

“No, sir ; I desire nothing of the kind ; it must be spontaneous humility. You must feel you have behaved very ill, and be very, very sorry for it.”

“I have behaved very ill, and am very, very sorry for it,” repeated he softly after her.

“And this is said seriously ?”

“Seriously.”

“And on honour ?”

“On honour !”

“And why is it said,—is it because I have asked you to say it ?”

“Partly ; that is, you have in asking given me courage to say it.”

“Courage to ask pardon ! what do you mean by that ?”

“No ; but courage to make me hope you care to hear it. Oh, Julia, for once listen to me seriously and let me tell you how I love you ; how I have always loved you ; how you are to me all that is worth living for.”

“It would be very nice to be told such pretty things, all the more being bound to believe them.”

“And do you doubt ?”

“I'll tell you what there is not, nor can be any doubt about, Jack ;

that we are both very poor, and though I, woman-like, may feel it a very comforting and sustaining thought, through my poverty, that one honest heart beats affectionately for me, yet I'm far from sure that it would be the same good influence over *your* life; in fact, our bargain would be unequal, and I should have all the best of it."

"Oh, Julia, could you love me——?"

"I think I've done things fully as hard," said she with affected thoughtfulness.

"Do you think me then so hopeless of advancement in life that I shall live and die the humble creature you now see me?"

"No, I don't think that. I think if fate is not very dead against you, you are likely, whatever you turn to, or wherever you go, to make your way, but to do this, you must be heart-whole; the selfishness that men call ambition cannot afford to be weighed with thought of another and another's welfare. Have a little patience with me—hear me out, for I am saying what I have thought over many and many an hour—what I have already told Nelly. There's an old Persian fable that says, the people who love on through life, are like two lovers who walk on opposite banks of a river and never meet till the river mingles with the ocean, which is eternity, and then they are parted no more. Are you satisfied with this? I thought not. Well, what are your plans for the future?"

"I have scores of them. If I would take service with any of those South American republics, there is not one would not give me rank and station to-morrow. Brazil would take me. If I offered myself to the Sultan's Government, where I am known, I could have a command at once."

"I don't know that I like Turkish ideas on the marriage state," said she gravely.

"Julia, Julia! do not torture me," cried he anxiously. "It is my very life is at stake,—be serious for once." He took her hand tenderly as he spoke, and was bending down to kiss it, when a heavy foot was heard approaching, and suddenly L'Estrange burst into the room with an open newspaper in his hand.

"I have got something here will surprise you, Jack," he cried. "You will be astonished to learn that you owe your escape from Ischia to no intrepidity of your own, that you had neither act or part in the matter, but that it was all due to the consummate skill of a great diplomatist, who represented England at Naples. Listen to this: it is 'our own special correspondent' who writes:—'I have naturally been curious to ascertain the exact history of Rogers' escape, the journals of this country having invested that event with most melodramatic, I might go further, and say incredible details. My own knowledge of the precautions adopted against evasion, and the jealous care bestowed by the Neapolitan Government towards political prisoners, rendered me slow to believe that an unaided convict would have the slightest chance of effecting his liberation, and so far as I can learn, late events have not diminished in any degree my faith in this opinion.

" 'If the stories which circulate in diplomatic circles are to be credited, it was H. B. M.'s special envoy at this Court who planned the whole achievement. He, seeing the fatal obduracy of the King's Ministers, and the utter impracticability of all proceedings to instil into them notions of right or honour, determined, while prosecuting the cause with unusual ardour, to remove the basis of the litigation. By what bribery he effected his object, or of whom, I do not profess to know, though very high names are mentioned with unsparing freedom here, but the fact remains, that when the last despatch of the Foreign Secretary was on its road to our envoy, Rogers was careering over the glad waters in one of H. M.'s steam-launches—thus relieving the controversy of a very material and interesting item in the negotiation. Of course, this has no other foundation than mere rumour, but it is a rumour that no one assumes to discredit, nor, indeed, any to deny, except the very discreet officials of our mission here, who naturally protest that it is a fabrication of the French press. The envoy is still here, and actively proceeding against the Government for an indemnity for unjust imprisonment.' And now, Jack, here is the best of all. Listen to this. 'So sensible are our Ministers at home of the great service rendered by this adroit measure, the relief experienced by the removal of what at any moment might have become the very gravest of all questions—that of peace or war—that no reward is deemed too high for its distinguished author, and his Excellency Lord Viscount Culduff'—Culduff—"

"Lord Culduff!" cried Jack and Julia, in amazement.

"Viscount Culduff has been offered the post of ambassador at Constantinople!"

Jack snatched the paper from his hands, and stared in mute amazement at the lines.

"And is this the way fortunes are made in the world?" cried he at last.

"Only in the great walks of life, Jack. Small people talk and labour, take service in Argentine republics, or fight for Mussulmen; distinguished people fire but one shot, but it always explodes in the enemy's magazine."

"I wonder what he would have thought if he had known for whom he was negotiating," said Jack, drily. "I half suspect my distinguished brother-in-law would have left me in chains far rather than drive down the Corso with me."

"I declare—no, I won't say the spiteful thing that crossed my mind—but I will say, I'd like to have seen a meeting between you and your brother Temple."

"You think he'd have been so ashamed of me," said Jack, with a laugh.

"Not a bit of it. You might possibly have been ashamed of the situation—shocked with being such an unworthy member of a great house—but *he*, Temple, would have accepted you like a fever or an ague—a great calamity sent from above—but he would not have felt shame, any more than if you had been the scarlatina. Look at poor George," cried

she, with a merry laugh. "He thinks I've said something very wicked, and he feels he ought to deplore it, and possibly rebuke me."

Jack could not help laughing at the rueful expression of L'Estrange's face, and his emotion was catching, for the others joined in the laugh, and in this merry mood returned to the garden.

CHAPTER LX.

A RETURN HOME.

THE morning that followed this scene broke very happily on the villa, for Augustus was to arrive by the afternoon packet, and all were eager to meet him. His telegram said, "Cutbill is with me; but I do not know if he will stop." And this announcement, indeed, more than tempered the pleasure they felt at the thought of meeting Augustus.

Jack, whose sailor's eye had detected a thin sheet of smoke in the sky long ere the others had seen it, and knew by what time the steamer might arrive, hastened down to the shore to meet his brother alone, not wishing that the first meeting should be observed by others. And he was so far right. Men as they were,—tried and hardened by the world's conflict,—they could not speak as they clasped each other in their arms; and when they separated to gaze at each other's faces, their eyes swam in heavy tears. "My poor fellow!" was all that Augustus could say for several minutes, till, struck by the manly vigour and dignified bearing of the other, he cried out, "What a great powerful fellow you have grown, Jack. You are twice as strong as you used to be."

"Strong enough, Gusty; but I suppose I shall need it all. But how comes it that you have grey hair here?"

"You find me terribly changed, Jack? I have aged greatly since we met."

"You are tired now, old fellow. A little rest and the pleasant care of the villa will soon set you up again."

"Perhaps so. At all events, I have strength enough for what I am called on to bear. How are they all?"

"Well and hearty. I'd say jollier than I ever saw them before."

"What a noble girl is Nelly."

"Ay, and her companion, too. I tell you, Gusty, there's the same comrade spirit amongst girls that there is in a ship's company; and where good ones come together, they make each other better. But tell me now of yourself. What's your news?"

"Not good; far from it. I believe, indeed, our cause is 'up.' He—Pracontal I mean—intends to behave handsomely by us. There will be no severity used. Indeed, he means to go further; but I'll have time enough for all this later on. I'm so glad to see you again, my poor dear fellow, that I have no mind to think of anything else."

"How did you get rid of Cutbill?"

"I haven't got rid of him ; he is on board there. I don't think he means to land. I suspect he'll go on with the steamer to-night ; and he is so ashamed to show that he is snug in his berth all this time."

"But what does he mean by that?"

"He's in a scrape, Jack, and had to get away from England to save himself from a gaol ; but I'll tell you the story this evening,—or better still, I'll make him tell you, if you can manage to make him come on shore."

"That he shall do," said Jack. "He behaved like a trump to me once when I was in trouble ; and I don't forget it." And so saying, he hastened on board the packet, and hurried below, to re-appear in a few minutes, holding Cutbill by the collar, as though he were his prisoner.

"Here's the culprit," cried Jack ; "and if he won't land his luggage, he must take a Montenegro rig like mine ; and he'll become it well."

"There, don't collar me that fashion. See how the fellows are all staring at us. Have you no decency?"

"Will you come quietly, then?"

"Yes ; let them hand up my two trunks and my violin case. What a droll place this is."

"There's many a worse, I can tell you, than our villa yonder. If it were my own, I'd never ask to leave it."

"Nor need you, Jack," whispered Augustus. "I've brought back money to buy it ; and I hope it will be our home this many a day."

"What's this scrape of yours, Cutty?" said Jack, as they made their way homewards. "Whom have you been robbing this time, or was it forgery?"

"Let him tell you," said Cutbill, doggedly, as he motioned with his hand towards Gusty.

"It's a mixed case of robbery with housebreaking," said Augustus. Pracontal had taken it into his head that certain papers of great value to himself were concealed in some secret press in our house at Castello ; and Cutbill was just as convinced that there were no papers and no press, and that the whole was a dream or a delusion. He argued the case so often that they got to quarrel about it."

"No, we didn't quarrel," broke in Cutbill, sulkily ; "we betted."

"Yes, that is more correct. Pracontal was so firmly persuaded that the papers existed that he offered three to one on it, and Cutbill, who likes a good thing, took it in hundreds."

"No. I wish I had. It was in fifties."

"As they had no permission to make the search ; which required to break down the wall, and damage a valuable fresco——"

"No. It was under the fresco, in a pedestal. I'd engage to make it good for thirty shillings," broke in Cutbill.

"Well, we'll not dispute that. The essential point is, that Pracontal's scruples would not permit him to proceed to an act of depredation, but that Cutbill had more resolution. He wanted to determine the fact."

"Say that he wanted to win his money, and you'll be nearer the mark," interposed Cutbill.

"Whichever way we take it, it amounts to this: Pracontal would not be a housebreaker, and Cutbill had no objection to become one. I cannot give you the details of the infraction—perhaps *he* will."

Cutbill only grunted, and the other went on,—“However he obtained entrance, he made his way to the place indicated, smashed the wall, and dragged forth a box with four or five thick volumes, which turned out to be the parish registries of Portshandon for a very eventful period, at least a very critical one for us, for, if the discovery loses Mr. Cutbill his fifty pounds, it places the whole estate in jeopardy.”

“That’s the worst of it,” cried Cutbill. “My confounded meddling has done it all.”

“When my lawyer came to hear what had occurred, and how, he lost no time in taking measures to proceed against Cutbill for a felony; but Master C. had got away, and was already hiding in Germany, and our meeting on the steamboat here was a mere hazard. He was bound for—where was it, Cutbill?”

“Albania. I want to see the salt mines. There’s something to be done there now that the Turks are not sure they’ll own the country this time twelvemonth.”

“At all events, it’s better air than Newgate,” said Jack.

“As you politely observe, sir, it’s better air than Newgate. By the way, you’ve been doing a little stroke of work as a gaolbird latterly—is it jolly?”

“No; it ain’t exactly jolly; it’s too monotonous for that. And then the diet.”

“Ah, there’s the rub! It’s the skilly, it’s the four-ounce system, I’m afraid of. Make it a good daily regimen, and I’ll not quarrel with the mere confinement, nor ask for any extension of the time allotted to exercise.”

“I must say,” said Jack, “that, for a very acute and ingenious gentleman, this same piece of burglary was about one of the stupidest performances I ever heard of.”

“Not so fast, admiral, not so fast. I stood on a double event. I had lent Pracontal a few hundreds, to be repaid by as many thousands if he established his claim. I began to repent of my investment, and my bet was a hedge. Do you see, old fellow, if there were no books, I pocketed a hundred and fifty. If the books turned up, I stood to win on the trial. You may perceive that Tom Cutbill sleeps like a weasel, and has always one eye open.”

“Was it a very friendly part, then, to lend a man money to prosecute a claim against your own friend?” asked Jack.

“Lord love ye, I’d do that against my brother. The man of business and the deak is one thing, the man of human feelings and affections is another. If a man follows any pursuit worth the name of a pursuit,

the ardour to succeed in it will soon swamp his scruples ; ay, and not leave him one jot the worse for it. Listen to me a minute. Did you ever practise fly-fishing ? Well, can you deny it is in principle as ignoble a thing as ever was called sport ? It begins in a fraud, and it finishes with a cruelty ; and will you tell me that your moral nature, or any grand thing that you fancy dignifies you, was impaired or stained when you landed that eight-pound trout on the grass ? ”

“ You forget that men are not trout, Master Cutbill.”

“ There are a good number of them gudgeons, I am happy to say,” cried he. “ Give me a light for my cigar, for I am sick of discussion. Strange old tumble-down place this—might all be got for a song, I’d swear. What a grand spec it would be to start a company to make a watering-place of it. ‘The Baths of Cattaro, celebrated in the time of Diocletian’—eh ? Jack, doesn’t your mouth water at the thought of ‘ preliminary expenses ? ’ ”

“ I can’t say it does. I’ve been living among robbers lately, and I found them very dull company.”

“ The sailor is rude ; his manners smack of the cockpit,” said Cutbill, nudging Augustus in the side. “ Oh, dear, how I’d like a commission to knock this old town into a bathing machine.”

“ You’ll have ample time to mature your project up at the villa. There, you see it yonder.”

“ And is that the British flag I see waving there ? Wait a moment till I master my emotion, and subdue the swelling feelings of my breast.”

“ I’ll tell you what, Master Cutbill,” said Jack, sternly, “ if you utter any stupid rubbish against the Union Jack, I’ll be shot if I don’t drop you over the sea-wall for a ducking ; and, what’s more, I’ll not apologize to you when you come out.”

“ Outrage the second. The naval service is not what I remember it.”

“ Here come the girls,” said Augustus. “ I hear Julia’s merry laugh in the wood.”

“ The L’Estrange girl, isn’t it ? ” asked Cutbill ; and though Jack started and turned almost as if to seize him, he never noticed the movement.

“ Miss L’Estrange,” said Augustus Bramleigh.

“ Why didn’t you say she was here, and I’d not have made any ‘ bones ’ about stopping ? I don’t know I was ever as spoony as I was about that girl up at Albano. And didn’t I work like a negro to get back her two thousand pounds out of that precious coal-mine ? Ay, and succeeded too. I hope she knows it was Tom Cutbill saved the ship. Maybe she’ll think I’ve come to claim salvage.”

“ She has heard of all your good nature, and is very grateful to you,” said Gusty.

“ That’s right ; that’s as it ought to be. Doing good by stealth always strikes me as savouring of a secret society. It’s Thuggee, or Fenian, or any other dark association you like.”

"I'll go forward and meet them, if you'll permit me," said Augustus, and, not waiting a reply, hurried on towards the wood.

"Look here, Master Jack," said Cutbill, stopping short, and facing round in front of him. "If you mean as a practice to sit upon me on every occasion that arises, just please to say so."

"Nothing of the kind, man; if I did, I promise you once would be quite enough."

"Oh, that's it, is it?"

"Yes, that's it."

"Shake hands then, and let us have no more squabbling. If you ever find me getting into shoal-water, and likely to touch a sandbank, just call out 'stop her!' and you'll see how I'll reverse my engine at once. It's not in my line, the locomotives, but I *could* drive if I was put to it, and I know well every good lesson a man acquires from the practice."

"What do you think of this cause of ours, Cutty; how does it look to your eyes?"

"Just as dark as thunder! Why you go to trial at all next term I can't make out. Pracontal's case is clear as noonday. There's the proof of the marriage,—as legal a marriage as if an archbishop celebrated it, and there's the registry of birth, and there is, to confirm all, old Bramleigh's letters. If you push on after such a show of danger signals as these, it is because you must like a smash."

"You'd strike then without firing a shot?"

"To be sure I would, if it was only to save the expense of the powder; besides, Pracontal has already declared, that if met by an amicable spirit on your brother's part, there are no terms he would not accede to, to secure recognition by your family, and acceptance as one of you."

"I'm sure I don't see why he should care for it."

"Nor I, for the matter of that. If there's a lot in life I'd call enviable, it would be to be born in a foundling hospital, and inherit ten thousand a year. A landed estate, and no relations, comes nearer to my ideas of Paradise than anything in Milton's poems."

"Here they come," cried Jack, as a merry group issued from the road, and came joyously forward to meet them.

"Here's this good fellow Tom Cutbill come to spend some days with us," said Jack, as the girls advanced to greet him.

"Isn't it kind of him?" said Cutbill. "Isn't it like that disinterested good nature that always marks him? Of course I'm heartily welcome! how could it be otherwise? Miss Bramleigh, you do me proud. Miss Julia, your slave. Ah, your reverence! let's have a shake of your devout paw. Now I call this as pleasant a place for a man to go through his sentence of transportation as need be. Do the ladies know what I'm charged with?"

"They know nothing, they desire to know nothing," said Augustus. "When we have dined and had our coffee, you shall make your own confession; and that only if you like it, and wish to disburden your conscience."

"My conscience is pretty much like my balance at my banker's,—it's a mighty small matter, but somehow it never troubles me; and you'll see by-and-by that it doesn't interfere with my appetite."

"You saw my sister at Naples, Mr. Cutbill," said Nelly, "how was she looking?"

"Decidedly handsome, and as haughty as handsome; as an Irish friend who was walking with me one day her carriage passed, observed, 'A bow from her was the next thing to a black eye.'"

"Marion's pride always became her," said Nelly coldly.

"It must be a comfort to her to feel she has a great stock of what suits her complexion."

"And the noble viscount," asked Jack, "how was he looking?"

"As fresh as paint. The waxworks in the Museum seemed faded and worn after him. He was in an acute attack of youth the day I dined with him last, and I hope his constitution has not suffered by it."

"Stop her," muttered Jack, with a sly look at Cutbill; and to the surprise of the others, that astute individual rejoined, "Stop her, it is."

"We dine at four, I think," said Bramleigh, and there's just time to dress. Jack, take charge of Cutbill, and show him where he is to lodge."

"And is it white choker and a fiddle coat? Do you tell me you dress for dinner?" asked Cutbill.

"Mr. Cutbill shall do exactly as he pleases," said Julia; "we only claim a like privilege for ourselves."

"You've got it now, Tom Cutbill," said he sorrowfully, "and I hope you like it."

And with this they went their several ways; Jack alone, lingering in the garden in the hope to have one word with Julia; but she did not return, and his "watch on deck," as he called it, was not relieved.

Great Solar Eclipses.

ON the seventeenth of August there will occur the most remarkable solar eclipse that has taken place within historic times, or that will take place for many hundreds of years. A black shadow upwards of 140 miles in diameter, surrounded by a penumbra 4,000 miles wide, will sweep from the eastern parts of Africa across the Arabian Sea, the Indian peninsula, and the East Indian Archipelago—a distance of more than 8,000 miles. The Royal Society and the Astronomical Society have sent out expeditions, well supplied with telescopes, spectroscopes, polariscopes,—in fact, with all the appliances of modern astronomical science,—to take advantage of so favourable an opportunity for obtaining an answer to the interesting questions respecting solar physics which have been suggested by the phenomena of former eclipses. A particular interest is attached to the inquiry in consequence of the remarkable discoveries which have been made during the past few years by direct examination of the solar orb. The whirling motion of the solar spots; their strange periodicity; the singular association which exists between this periodicity and the periodicity of terrestrial magnetic variations; the suspected influence of the planets upon the solar atmosphere; these and many other singular discoveries await interpretation, and a strong impression prevails among astronomers that the solution of these problems will be hastened if the observations of the great eclipse should prove successful.

Among the total eclipses recorded during historic times, there are some which stand out among the rest on account either of their magnitude or of the historical interest associated with them. We propose to give a brief account of the more remarkable solar eclipses whose records have been preserved. Before doing so, however, it may be well to point out the circumstances on which the magnitude of a solar eclipse depends; and to explain why it is that so few eclipses occur which deserve to be ranked among great total eclipses.

The average apparent dimensions of the sun exceed those of the moon. But both bodies vary in apparent magnitude—the moon more than the sun. Perhaps many of our readers will be surprised to learn that we receive fully one-fourth more light from some full moons than from others, owing to the variation of her apparent magnitude. Accordingly, when she is at her largest, and the sun at his smallest, she is able to hide him wholly from our view, and considerably to overlap his disc all round.

But there is another circumstance besides proximity to the earth which affects the moon's apparent dimensions. She appears to grow larger as she rises above the horizon. We are not referring, of course, to the

appearance which she presents to the naked eye. Judged in this way she seems to grow smaller as she rises above the horizon. But when she is measured by any trustworthy instrument the reverse is found to be the case. The cause of the peculiarity is not far to seek. We see the moon, not from the centre of her orbit (that is, the earth's centre), but from a point on the earth's surface,—a point, therefore, which is four thousand miles nearer to the moon's orbit. Accordingly, if the moon were directly overhead (which never happens in our latitudes) her distance from us would be diminished by 4,000 miles, and she would look proportionately larger. The sun is not affected in this way, because four thousand miles is a mere nothing in comparison with the enormous distance at which the sun is removed from us. Accordingly, other things being equal, the higher the moon is at the time of a total eclipse, the greater is the eclipse.

In order, therefore, that an eclipse may be as great as possible, the sun should be as far as possible from the earth, which happens about the beginning of July; the moon should be as near as possible to the earth, which happens (roughly speaking) once in every lunar month; and the sun and moon should be almost immediately overhead, which can only happen at midday in tropical countries. It will readily be conceived how seldom these conditions can be fulfilled (in combination with the other conditions which determine the occurrence of an eclipse at all). In fact it has never yet happened that any very close approach has been made to the simultaneous fulfilment of all the conditions.

But, in the coming eclipse two of the conditions will be almost exactly fulfilled, and the third pretty nearly so. The moon will be so near that her apparent diameter will only fall short of its greatest possible value by about one-thousandth part. At the time of greatest eclipse (which happens when the black shadow is traversing the East Indian Archipelago) the eclipsed sun will be less than three degrees from the point immediately overhead; and, lastly, the sun's apparent diameter will be very much smaller than it is when he is at his mean distance from the earth.

We proceed to discuss a few of the most remarkable eclipses recorded by ancient historians.

It is rather singular that no eclipses are recorded in the Bible. There have been some astronomers who have imagined that the "going back of the shadow upon the dial of Ahaz" was caused by a partial eclipse of the sun. But this supposition seems too fanciful to be admitted, even if it were the case that a partial eclipse could have caused the retrogression of the shadow. We are told distinctly that the "going back of the shadow" was a miraculous, not a natural event; and even if this were not so, or if we might infer that it was the prophet's foreknowledge of an approaching eclipse which constituted the miracle, yet it may readily be shown that no partial or total eclipse could produce the effects described. Such an eclipse undoubtedly causes an irregularity in the motion of the shadow on a dial; the shadow at first moves more slowly, afterwards more quickly, than it would otherwise do, but it cannot possibly go back.

The first important eclipse whose records have reached us is that which occurred in the year 584 B.C. It took place, Herodotus relates, while the Medes and Lydians were engaged in battle. He thus describes the occurrence:—"The war had continued between the two nations with balanced success for five years. In the sixth year of the war another battle took place; and after both sides had fought without advantage, and when the engagement was growing warm, the day was suddenly turned into night. This had been foretold to the Ionians by Thales the Milesian, who predicted the time of the year in which it would happen. The Lydians and Medes, seeing that day had given place to night, desisted from combat, and were equally anxious to make peace." Astronomers and historians had for a long time been in doubt respecting the date of this remarkable eclipse. The astronomical difficulty of the question is connected with an interesting peculiarity of lunar motion, into which we need not now enter. Until this peculiarity had been mastered, which has only happened quite recently, Baily's supposition that the eclipse must have occurred in the year 609 B.C., was accepted as the best solution of the difficulty. But the Astronomer Royal has now proved beyond a doubt that the eclipse took place on May 28, in the year 584 B.C., the very year assigned to the event by Cicero and Pliny.

Xenophon mentions a remarkable eclipse which led to the capture of Larissa by the Persians. During the retreat which was so ably conducted by Xenophon, the Greeks passed "a large deserted city called Larissa, formerly inhabited by the Medes. Its walls were twenty-five feet thick and 100 feet high; its circumference two parasangs; it was built of burnt brick, on a foundation of stone twenty feet high. When the Persians conquered the Medes, the Persian king besieged this city, but was unable to capture it till a cloud hid the sun wholly from view, when the inhabitants withdrew in great fear, and the city was captured." Xenophon mentions that the Greeks, after passing Larissa, reached another deserted city called Mespila. Layard has identified Larissa with the modern Nimroud, where there still exist the very ruins described by Xenophon; Mespila he identifies with the modern Mosul. Of course it is impossible to doubt that a total eclipse of the sun, and not the mere concealment of the sun under a cloud, was the cause of the city's capture. The Astronomer Royal has shown that this interesting event occurred on May 19, 556 B.C.

Another eclipse has been examined by the Astronomer Royal, which had given great trouble to historians. This is the eclipse which took place when Xerxes was advancing with his army from Sardis to Abydos. Herodotus relates that just as the army was setting forth the sun suddenly disappeared from its place in the heavens, though there were no clouds, and the sky was perfectly clear; "thus," says he, "the day was turned into night." Mr. Airy, however, refers this description to the total eclipse of the moon, which took place on March 18, 478 B.C. No total eclipse of the sun appears to be reconcilable with the account of Herodotus,

and therefore it seems reasonable to infer that there is an error of some sort in his narrative.

It is singular how often the occurrence of a total eclipse is connected with the military and naval undertakings of ancient nations. Most of our readers must remember the narrative of the total eclipse which seriously threatened the success of the expedition of the Athenians under Pericles against the Lacedæmonians. "The whole fleet was in readiness, and Pericles on board his own galley, when there happened an eclipse of the sun. The sudden darkness was looked upon as an unfavourable omen, and threw the sailors into the greatest consternation. Pericles, observing that the pilot was much astonished and perplexed, took his cloak, and having covered his eyes with it, asked him if he found anything terrible in that, or considered it as a bad presage? Upon his answering in the negative, Pericles said, 'Where is the difference, then, between this and the other, except that something bigger than my cloak causes the eclipse?'"

But perhaps the most interesting of all the problems with which ancient eclipses have supplied our modern astronomers, is that which is connected with what is termed the eclipse of Agathocles. After his defeat by the Carthaginians, Agathocles was besieged by them in Syracuse. But taking advantage of a relaxation in the vigilance of the blockading fleet, occasioned by the approach of a fleet which had been sent for his relief, he quitted Syracuse, and passing over into Africa, waged for four years a successful war against the Carthaginian forces. It is related by Diodorus Siculus that the voyage to Africa occupied six days, and that on the second day of the journey an eclipse occurred, during which the darkness was so great that stars became visible in all directions. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the eclipse was a total one. But it has been found difficult to reconcile this account with the calculated path of the moon's shadow during the only total eclipse which corresponds with the historical and chronological details of the event. Baily's calculation of the eclipse threw the shadow about 200 miles from the most southerly position which can possibly have been attained by Agathocles on the second day of his journey from Syracuse. The labours of the Astronomer Royal, founded on improved tables of the lunar motions, have been more successful; and he has shown that the northern limit of the zone of total shadow must have passed some seventy or eighty miles south of Syracuse—a distance which might readily have been traversed by Agathocles within the time named.

It is related by Philostratus in his *Life of Apollonius*, that a singular phenomenon preceded and announced the death of the Emperor Domitian. "A certain crown, resembling the Iris, surrounded the sun's disc and hid his light." We cannot doubt that reference is here made to a total eclipse of the sun, and calculation shows that such an eclipse occurred in the year ninety-five of our Lord.

We pass to the records of eclipses which have occurred more recently.

William of Malmesbury relates that the eclipse of August 2, 1188, presaged the death of Henry I. "The elements shewed their grief," he says, "at the passing away of this great king. For on that day the sun hid his resplendent face at the sixth hour, in fearful darkness, disturbing men's minds by his eclipse."

Seven years later another remarkable eclipse occurred which is thus referred to by the same writer:—"In the Lent the sun and the moon darkened about noontide, when men were eating; and they lighted candles to eat by. That was the thirteenth day before the calends of April." (The worthy chronicler might as well have adhered to the more usual method of expressing the date.) "Men were very much struck with wonder." "The darkness became so great," he says elsewhere, "that men feared the ancient chaos was about to return, and on going out, they perceived several stars around the sun."

Amongst all the eclipses hitherto mentioned there is only one—viz. the eclipse of Thales—which is comparable with that of August 17. And among more recent eclipses there is only one other approaching it in magnitude. This eclipse, which occurred on June 17, 1488, was visible in Scotland, and was long remembered in that country as "the Black Hour." It occurred at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the records preserved respecting it relate that nothing was visible during the height of the totality. Professor Grant considers that "this last remark is a manifest exaggeration." Be this as it may, there can be no doubt that the eclipse was one of unusual extent, for the mathematician Maclaurin found that "at the time of its occurrence the sun was only two degrees from perigee, the moon not more than thirteen degrees from apogee." But neither in this eclipse nor in that of Thales did the totality last so long as it will during the approaching eclipse.

In 1598 another total eclipse occurred which was visible in the British Isles. The day of the eclipse was remembered for a long time afterwards as *Black Saturday*. In a similar way the day of the total eclipse of 1652 was named *Mirk Monday* by the people of Scotland, and although the eclipse has long since been forgotten, the expression is still used in many parts of that country.

It is singular that none of the eclipses we have recorded had led to any observations of any value to the physical inquirer. Modern eclipses, on the contrary, derive their chief interest from observations of this sort.

In the total eclipse of 1706, which was observed at Montpellier, and a variety of other places in Western and Central Europe, the bright stars Aldeboran and Capella, and the planets Venus, Mercury and Saturn, were visible to the naked eye. "Bats flew about as they do at dusk. Fowls and pigeons flew hastily to their roosts. Cage-birds were silent, and hid their heads under their wings. Animals at labour in the fields stood still." Duillier relates that at Geneva the Council were compelled to close their deliberations, as they could see neither to read nor write. "In many

places people fell prostrate on the ground, and prayed with earnestness, imagining that the Day of Judgment was come. From the tops of the Swiss mountains as many stars were seen as at the time of full moon. A peculiar colour overspread the sky resembling neither the darkness of night nor the mixed colours of the twilight sky. Even those who were prepared for the spectacle were appalled by the solemn gloom which fell upon the face of nature."

Halley speaks in similar terms of the last total eclipse which was visible in London. It took place in the year 1715. "I forbear," says Halley, "to mention the chill and damp which attended the darkness of this eclipse, of which most spectators were sensible and equally judges. Nor shall I trouble you with the concern that appeared in all sorts of animals, birds, beasts, and fishes, upon the extinction of the sun, since ourselves could hardly behold it without some sense of horror."

The eclipse of May 2, 1788, is remarkable as being the first in which the singular appearances termed the "red prominences" were observed. "Four spots of a reddish colour were seen near the limb of the moon, but not in immediate contact with it." The chief interest attending the observation of total eclipses is at present centred on these mysterious protuberances. It has been shown very clearly that they belong to the sun, but what they may be, or what tremendous processes going on within his atmosphere they may be held to indicate, remains as yet unknown. It is hoped that the long duration of the totality of the approaching eclipse, and the circumstance that it will be possible to observe the eclipse at several points along the shadow's track (which it will be remembered is upwards of 8,000 miles long) will enable astronomers to gain some knowledge respecting the red prominences. Yet more hopeful is the fact that now, for the first time, the subtle analytical power of the most wonderful instrument of research yet invented—the spectroscope—will be applied to examine these strange solar excrescences.

We pass over several total eclipses to come to the first of those which have been made the object of scientific expeditions. The eclipse of July 8, 1842, which was visible in the north of Italy, and in parts of France, Germany, and Russia, aroused an intense interest among European astronomers. The leading observers of France, Italy, England, Germany, and Russia repaired to various suitable stations along the track of central eclipse. M. Arago went to Perpignan, M. Valz to Marseilles, M. Petit to Montpellier; M. Carlini went to Milan, MM. Santini and Conti to Padua; the Astronomer Royal went to Superga, Baily to Pavia; M. Schumacher and Littrow awaited the eclipse at Vienna; and, lastly, the Russian observers, O. Struve and Schidlowski, went to Lipetsk. All these observers were fortunate in obtaining excellent views of the phenomenon. We shall quote M. Arago's interesting description of the occurrence:—

"At Perpignan, persons who were seriously unwell alone remained within doors. As soon as day began to break, the population covered the terraces and battlements of the town, as well as all the little eminences in

the neighbourhood, in hopes of obtaining a view of the sun as he ascended above the horizon. At the citadel we had under our eyes, besides numerous groups of citizens established on the slopes, a body of soldiers about to be reviewed. The hour of the commencement of the eclipse drew nigh. More than twenty thousand persons, with smoked glasses in their hands, were examining the radiant globe projected upon an azure sky. Although armed with our powerful telescopes, we had hardly begun to discern the small notch on the western limb of the sun, when an immense exclamation, formed by the blending together of twenty thousand different voices, announced to us that we had anticipated, by only a few seconds, the observation made with the unaided eye by twenty thousand astronomers equipped for the occasion, whose first essay this was. A lively curiosity, a spirit of emulation, the desire of not being outdone, had the privilege of giving to the natural vision an unusual power of penetration. During the interval that elapsed between this moment and the almost total disappearance of the sun, we remarked nothing worthy of relation in the countenances of so many spectators. But when the sun, reduced to a very narrow filament, began to throw upon the horizon only a very feeble light, a sort of uneasiness seized upon all; every person felt a desire to communicate his impressions to those around him. Hence arose a deep murmur, resembling that sent forth by the distant ocean after a tempest. The hum of voices increased in intensity as the solar crescent grew more slender; at length the crescent disappeared, darkness suddenly succeeded light, and an absolute silence marked this phase of the eclipse, with as great precision as did the pendulum of our astronomical clock. The phenomenon in its magnificence had triumphed over the petulance of youth, over the levity which certain persons assume as a sign of superiority, over the noisy indifference of which soldiers usually make profession. A profound stillness also reigned in the air; the birds had ceased to sing. After an interval of solemn expectation, which lasted about two minutes, transports of joy, shouts of enthusiastic applause, saluted with the same accord, the same spontaneous feeling, the first reappearance of the rays of the sun. To a condition of melancholy, produced by sentiments of an indefinable nature, there succeeded a lively and intelligible feeling of satisfaction, which no one sought to escape from or moderate the impulses of; to the majority of the public the phenomenon had arrived at its term. The other phases of the eclipse had few attentive spectators, beyond the persons specially devoted to astronomical pursuits."

M. Arago quotes also a beautiful anecdote in illustration of the peculiar influence produced by the total eclipse of the sun's light, and of the joy which springs unbidden to the heart at the return of his beams. A little girl was watching her flock when the sun began to be darkened. As it gradually lost its light she became more and more distressed, and when at length it disappeared altogether her terror was so great that she began to weep and to cry out for help. "Her tears were still flowing when the sun sent forth his first ray. Reassured by his light, the child signed

herself with the cross, exclaiming, in the *patois* of the province, 'O, beau Souleou !' (oh, beau soleil !)

Remarkable effects were produced on birds and animals by the sudden darkness. Bats and owls came out from their retreats ; domestic fowl went to roost ; and swallows were seized with so great a terror that in some places they were caught in the streets. A herd of cattle grazing in the fields near Montpellier "formed themselves into a circle, their heads directed outwards, as if to resist an attack." Horses and oxen employed in the fields ceased from their labours when the sun was totally eclipsed, and lay down, neither whip nor spur availing to induce them to resume their work until the sun's light returned. On the other hand, M. Arago states that "the horses employed in the diligences continued to pursue their courses without seeming to be in the slightest degree affected by the phenomenon." During this eclipse, also, it was noticed that several plants closed their leaves.

The close accordance between the calculations of mathematicians and the observed circumstances of the eclipse excited great attention, and led scientific as well as unlearned men to contemplate with admiration the perfection and regularity of the movements of the celestial bodies. "All the accounts respecting this eclipse," says Signor Piola, "contain reflections on the perfection of that great machine of the universe, whose movements are so regular that the astronomer is enabled, long beforehand, to predict their effects with unfailling precision ; and from contemplating the machine, it was natural to ascend to the Supreme Artificer. While this idea swells in the mind there is another which at the same time shrinks into insignificance,—that suggested by contemplating the position of man in the midst of creation. The magnificence of the scale upon which the phenomena of the eclipse, whether atmospheric or celestial, took place, was patent to every spectator. The extensive coloration of an unusual hue that was visible ; the rapid changes which occurred ; above all, the obscurity which settled over nature like the funereal pall thrown over a dead body, and whose subsequent withdrawal in an instant operated like a resurrection ;—all this produced on the mind a mixture of profound and indefinable impressions which it will be pleasing to hold long in remembrance."

And here we may digress for a moment to remark how unworthy of the philosopher and student of nature is that spirit which leads men to look with less admiration on natural phenomena that have received their interpretation from the labours of scientific men. No mystery of nature has ever yet been unveiled without disclosing what is yet more mysterious. Copernicus revealed the secret of the solar system, to leave undetected the laws which harmonize the planetary motions. It was Kepler's boast that he had revealed these laws, but he left men to admire without understanding their perfection and harmony. Then Newton upraised the veil and disclosed to our admiration the noble law of gravitation which sways all systems through the universe. But we have more now to perplex

us, more to reveal to us the insignificance of our powers, more to make us fall in reverence and adoration before the Supreme Architect, than had the simple Chaldean shepherds, who

Watched from the centres of their sleeping flocks
Those radiant Mercuries, that seemed to move,
Carrying through æther, in perpetual round,
Decrees and resolutions of the gods.

If our higher knowledge of the mysteries of nature should lead us to have less of reverence and love for the author of those mysteries, it would have been better to have never gained that higher knowledge. Our words and works should be worthy of our new light. If men in the old times which we scoff at as the dark ages know how to worship their Almighty Father with loving, childlike reverence, and if we in the pride of our imperfect knowledge find it less easy to do so, it is we who are in darkness. Tennyson supplies a necessary caution to this age of somewhat sceptical inquiry, in the noble words,—

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music *as before*,
But vaster. We are fools and slight;
We mock Thee when we do not fear.
But help thy foolish ones to hear—
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Since the total eclipse of 1842 there have only occurred two which have attracted special notice among European astronomers. One is the eclipse of July 28, 1851, which was visible in Sweden; the other is the eclipse of July 18, 1860, which was visible in Spain, and led to the interesting "Himalaya expedition."

The totality lasted nearly twice as long in the eclipse of 1851 as in that of 1842. The Astronomer Royal, who had witnessed the earlier eclipse, was one of a distinguished company which left England for Sweden to observe the eclipse of 1851. "I have no means of ascertaining," he writes, "whether the darkness really was greater in the eclipse of 1842. I am inclined to think that in the wonderful, and I may say appalling, obscurity, I saw the grey granite hills, within sight of Hvalas, more distinctly than the darker country surrounding the Superga. But whether because, in 1851, the sky was much less clouded than in 1842, (so that the transition was from a more luminous state of sky to a darkness nearly equal in both cases,) or from whatever cause, the suddenness of the darkness in 1851 appeared to be much more striking than in 1842. My friends who were on the upper rock, to which the path was very good, had great difficulty in descending. A candle had been lighted in a lantern about a quarter of an hour before the totality; and M. Hasselgren was unable to read the minutes of the chronometer's face without having the lantern held close to the chronometer."

During this eclipse the red prominences were seen with remarkable distinctness. Airy at Gottenburg, Hind and Dawes at Røvelsburg, Lassell at the Trollhätten Falls, and other observers, took drawings of these remarkable appearances; and the agreement between the drawings is such as to leave no doubt of the care with which these observers examined and recorded what they saw. Round one part of the black limb of the moon there was seen a serrated band of rose-pink light, in another place a pyramidal red mountain, in a third a curved streak of red light formed like a Turkish scimeter, and in a fourth a red detached cloud, which Airy and Lassell picture as nearly circular in form, while Hind and Dawes represent it as triangular. No doubt could exist that these objects belonged to the sun and not to the moon, since the moon was seen to traverse them; insomuch that on the side towards which she was moving their altitude diminished, while on the opposite side they grew larger until the appearance of the sun's disc in this neighbourhood obliterated them through excess of light.

The observers were especially struck by the perfect distinctness with which these remarkable appearances were exhibited. "I had heard them described as but faint phenomena," says Lassell. "My surprise and astonishment may therefore be well imagined when the view presented itself to my eyes which I am about to describe. In the middle of the (telescopic) field was the body of the moon, rendered visible enough by the light of the corona attended by the apparent projections. These prominences were of the most brilliant lake colour,—a splendid pink quite defined and hard. They appeared to me to be not quiescent; but the moon passing over them, and therefore exhibiting them in different phase, might convey an idea of motion. They were evidently to my senses belonging to the sun, and not at all to the moon; for, especially on the western side of the sun, I observed that the moon passed over them, revealing successive portions of them as it advanced. In conformity with this observation also, I observed only the summit of *one* on the eastern side, though my friends, observing in adjoining rooms, had seen at least two; the time occupied by me in observing with the naked eye not having allowed me to repair again to the telescope until the moon had covered one and three-fourths of the other. . . . The first burst of light from the emergent sun was exactly in the place of the chief western flame, which it instantly extinguished."

When we consider the actual dimensions of these prominences we are enabled to form some conception of the importance of the problem which they present to astronomers and physicists. The scimeter-shaped protuberance was estimated to extend fully one-twelfth part of the sun's diameter from his surface. His diameter is known to be eight hundred and fifty thousand miles, so that the height of this singular object was fully seventy thousand miles, or nearly three times the circumference of our globe. Consider, again, the long serrated ridge extending around nearly a quarter of the sun's circumference. This ridge was about twenty-five thousand

miles high. Now many of our readers have doubtless seen the ranges of the Alps as they appear when seen from some distant point in clear weather, and they know how imposing is the aspect of these gigantic land-masses. Yet the highest peaks of the Alps are little more than fifteen thousand *feet* above the sea-level. Imagine, then, the magnificence of mountain ranges twenty-five thousand miles above the mean level of the sun's surface. And then note that the masses which present this ridge-like aspect were not really ridges. We doubtless see the side-view of a portion of immense tracts rising in wave-like masses over the solar globe. Consider also that all these masses must subsist at an inconceivably high temperature—a temperature at which nearly every substance known upon our earth would be not merely liquefied but vaporised.

But if these considerations are startling, what shall we say of the globe of ruddy matter suspended high above the solar surface. This globe had a diameter at least double that of our own earth, and therefore exceeded our earth eight times in volume. And, again, it hung suspended at a height of fully twenty thousand miles from the surface of the sun. What sort of an atmosphere must that be in which globes of this sort float as buoyantly as the clouds which fleck our summer skies? and how intensely active must all the processes be which are at work in the solar atmosphere when volumes so immense are maintained at the intense heat which the colour and buoyancy of the prominences, as well as their proximity to the sun, prove them to possess?

During the eclipse of 1860, the red prominences again attracted a great deal of attention among astronomers. It will be remembered that many leading English astronomers, amongst whom the Astronomer Royal again figured, took part in the celebrated Himalaya expedition. MM. Leverrier and Goldschmidt of Paris, the Padre Secchi of Rome, and a host of astronomical celebrities, took part in observing the various phenomena, astronomical, physical, and meteorological, which attended the totality of this important eclipse.

It is interesting, in the first place, to compare Mr. Airy's impressions as to the general effect of the totality with those which he formed during the two former eclipses. It is not often that the same observer—and that observer so skilful and eminent—has the opportunity of contrasting together three total eclipses of the sun. In fact, we doubt very much whether any similar case is on record. Hence, a peculiar value attaches to Mr. Airy's remarks. "On the progress of the eclipse," he says, "I have nothing to remark, except that I thought the singular darkening of the landscape, whose character is peculiar to an eclipse, to be sadder than usual. The cause of this peculiar character, I conceive to be the diminution of light in the higher strata of the air. When the sun is heavily clouded, still the upper atmosphere is brilliantly illuminated, and the diffused light which comes from it is agreeable to the eye. But when the sun is partially eclipsed, the illumination of the atmosphere for many miles round is also diminished, and the eye is oppressed by the absence of the light which

usually comes from it. . . . I had a wax-candle lighted in a lantern, as I have had at preceding total eclipses. Correcting the appreciations of my eye by reference to this, I found that the darkness of the approaching totality was much less striking than in the eclipses of 1842 and 1851. In my anxiety to lose nothing at the telescope, I did not see the approach of the dark shadow through the air; but, from what I afterwards saw of its retreat, I am sure it must have been very awful." "About the middle of the totality I ceased my measures for awhile, in order to view the prospect with the naked eye. The general light appeared to me much greater than in the eclipses of 1842 and 1851 (one cloudy, the other hazy)—perhaps ten times as great; I believe I could have read a chronometer at the distance of twelve inches; nevertheless, it was not easy to walk where the ground was in the least uneven, and much attention to the footing was necessary. The outlines of the mountains were clear, but all distances were totally lost; they were, in fact, in an undivided mass of black to within a small distance of the spectator. Above these, to the height perhaps of six or eight degrees, and especially remarkable on the north side, was a brilliant yellow, or orange, sky, without any trace of the lovely blush which I saw in 1851. Higher still the sky was moderately dark, but not so dark as in former eclipses."

Mr. Airy noted a remarkable circumstance in connection with the red prominences. They were not of the same colour as in 1842 and 1851. The *quality* of the colour was exactly the same—"full-blush red, (or nearly lake)—but it was diluted with white" (an evidence of higher temperature), "and more diluted at the roots of the prominences close to the moon's limb than in the most elevated points."

It is important that we should here remark in passing that the red prominences do not necessarily or probably spring from the sun's surface, as a mountain from the surface of the earth. Masses suspended in the solar atmosphere would *appear* as prominences resembling mountains, unless they happened to be of comparatively moderate extent, and were seen in such a position that the space between them and the sun's surface became perceptible. Those serrated ridges, therefore, that we see may belong to the upper surfaces of masses suspended high above the true surface of the sun. And since there have been cases in which the red matter has been *seen* to be suspended at a great distance from the sun, it seems not improbable that all the so-called prominences are similarly circumstanced.

Before proceeding, however, to inquire a little into the probable constitution of these marvellous objects, it will be well to give a brief description of what was seen by Continental observers during the last great eclipse. Leverrier says that the first object which he saw in the telescopic field of view when totality had commenced, was "an isolated cloud, entirely separated from the moon's limb by a space equal to its own size." He adds, that the colour of the cloud was a fine rose, tinged with violet, and almost white in some parts through exceeding brilliancy. Near this

cloud were two others, one above the other, the upper being the smaller; these were very unequally illuminated. Elsewhere he saw two elevated prominences close to each other, and in another part a protuberance resembling a tooth. Returning to the point where he had seen two clouds, he found them unaltered in figure. He now directed his attention to the part of the moon's limb behind which the sun was about to appear. Here he saw a long ridge of reddish purple colour, having a serrated outline.

M. Goldschmidt describes the appearance of one of the rose-coloured prominences in the following terms:—"The most imposing, as well as complicated of the prominences, which I will call the *chandelier*, was grand beyond description. It rose up from the limb, appearing like slender tongues of fire, and of a rose colour, its edges purple and transparent, allowing the interior of the prominence to be seen; in fact, I could see distinctly that the protuberance was hollow. Shortly before the end of the totality I saw escape from the rose-coloured and transparent sheaves of light a slight display in the shape of a fan, which gave to the protuberance a real resemblance to a chandelier. Its base, which at the commencement of the totality was noticed to be very decidedly on the black limb of the moon, became slightly less attached, and the whole took an appearance more ethereal or vapourish." M. Goldschmidt observed that the small jets of light disappeared as soon as the sun's rays became visible, but the prominence itself remained distinctly visible nearly five minutes after the reappearance of the sun. The rest of M. Goldschmidt's account corresponds closely with what is described by other observers. We may remark that his opinion respecting the hollowness of his "chandelier-prominence" seems founded on very insufficient evidence. The transparency of the outer parts of the prominence is a proof rather that the central parts were denser than that the prominence was hollow. But all that M. Goldschmidt says that he *observed* may be accepted with the fullest confidence, though no other observer has described similar appearances; for there has seldom lived so acute and skilful an observer as this astronomer. He was well known to fame as the discoverer of no less than thirteen asteroids, and numbers of nebulae and variable stars.

The Padre Secchi, of the Collegio Romano, remarks of one protuberance, that the point was "rather slender and curved, resembling a flame somewhat agitated." He remarked that as the moon passed across the solar disc so many luminous points appeared on the following edge of the black disc that he was embarrassed which to choose for observation and measurement. The prominences increased in size as the moon glided forwards, and he "saw, with surprise, an almost continuous arc of purple light instantaneously formed, composed of small protuberances, in that part of the lunar disc where the reappearance of the sun was expected." He remarks that his observations have convinced him "that the protuberances are connected with the sun, and that it is absurd to assert the contrary."

It appears to us that very little doubt can exist as to the general

character of the red prominences, though we are very far from asserting that their exact constitution can be readily determined.

In the first place, it is tolerably clear that they are not fixed in position. No motion has, indeed, been observed in them during the short time that they have continued visible in total eclipses. But we know that the whole of the sun's surface is in a state of continual agitation. The spots break out, vary in form, expand, contract, expand again, whirl around their nuclei, are suddenly spanned by sharply defined bridges of light, and after many such changes vanish altogether. All this while the region around the spots shows obvious traces of a continual flux and reflux of matter. Then, again, there are the periodic variations in the frequency of spots, and of the faculæ and maculæ which accompany them. And although there are only two bands on the sun's surface (corresponding in position to the temperate zones upon the earth's surface) on which these changes take place, yet we have distinct evidence that the great eleven-year period affects the whole surface of the sun. For at the time when spots are least frequent the sun's disc presents—sometimes for several months—an appearance never observed at any other time. Instead of appearing darker round the edge of the disc it is seen perfectly uniform in tint over its whole surface. This variability in the appearance of the sun's surface is inconsistent with the existence of masses of matter, fixed in position (or even permanent in character, but unfixed in position) over extensive solar regions.

We have also seen the probability that exists that the red prominences are detached from the sun's surface.

We know, thirdly, that they must exist at an inconceivably high temperature.

Lastly, the spectroscope has proved that the sun's light reaches us after passing through an extensive solar atmosphere, consisting of the vapours of many of our best-known metals. The vapour of iron, for instance, forms a part of the sun's atmosphere—much in the same way as aqueous vapour appears as a constituent of our own air.

It seems to us reasonable to conclude from these considerations that the objects called the red prominences are, in reality, *solar clouds*; only instead of consisting, as our terrestrial clouds do, of visible aqueous vapour (that is, of minute globules of water), they consist of the visible vapours of the various metals which exist in the solar atmosphere. In other words they are clouds formed by the condensation of the metallic vapours into liquid globules.

Leverrier was led by his observation of the eclipse of 1860 to associate the solar spots with the red prominences in a manner closely according with the view we have here put forward. "Observation proves," he says, "that the rose-coloured matter is accumulated occasionally on certain points in quantities more considerable than in others, and as the light of the corresponding part of the sun may possibly be found more or less extinguished, we arrive at a natural explanation of the spots on the sun's surface. These spots will exhibit the most varied forms and appearances,

subject to the most rapid changes, in a similar manner to what has been already observed, provided they are produced by *clouds*. They will change their position on the surface of the sun like clouds on the surface of the earth."

We trust that the great eclipse which is approaching will not pass without adding largely to our knowledge of solar physics. Everything seems favourable—the regularity of the Indian climate; the long range of inhabited country traversed by the shadow; the careful preparation which has been made for spectroscopic observation, and for taking photographic views of the phenomena presented during the totality. All these circumstances, and the exceptional character of the eclipse itself, combine to afford promise of interesting and important discoveries.

Since the above was written we have heard of several other expeditions which have been sent out to view this important eclipse. The Russian Government has sent an expedition to Aden, almost the nearest point at which the eclipse will be visible as a total one. The French Government sends out M. Jansen, the eminent observer, at the head of a well-appointed expedition. The Pope sends out Father Secchi. Mr. Pogson, the superintendent of the Government observatory at Madras, will also take part in the work of observing the eclipse. He has been supplied by Mr. Huggins, the eminent spectroscopist, with instruments for analysing the light from the corona and the coloured prominences. Certainly the eclipse will be well watched—unless the weather should unfortunately prove unfavourable. Nor will observers at home be altogether idle. The careful survey of the sun's disc for several days before and after the great eclipse will doubtless be carefully attended to by the eminent students of solar physics who have charge of the Kew Observatory. Thus it will be possible to determine what spots, if any, were on or near the boundary of the disc at the moment of totality; and the suspected association between the spots and the coloured prominences will be put to a satisfactory test.

How to Form a Good Taste in Art.*

DURING the last century knowledge of the fine arts, and interest about them, in England, were confined to what we should now call a very narrow circle. People travelled much less; the number of good private collections was smaller; public galleries did not exist; it was only just beginning to be understood that painting and sculpture were not a monopoly of the Italian race, but might even be practised with success by the remote and barbarous inhabitants of Britain. Little, consequently, was written about taste, and of that little hardly anything was of value except the admirable but unequal lectures of Reynolds; periodical exhibitions and criticism were unknown; and though a gentleman of money who had made the "grand tour" might think it becoming to collect *gems*, or statues, or pictures by such old masters as were then recognized, the idea of building a gallery had probably never occurred to the merchants and manufacturers of the age, at least out of London. "No demon," in Pope's phrase, whispered to them to "have a taste:" nor indeed was it likely that men educated in business, and ignorant of foreign lands, would appreciate very keenly the Caraccis, Guidos, Carlo Marattis, or the restored rubbish of Roman excavations, held up to them by the learned as the great examples of high art, and sole objects of enlightened admiration.

Every one knows how different a place these arts hold at the present time in every point at which I have just glanced. Above all, as the leading cause of the change, we have a great and flourishing school of our own. Sculpture, it is true, lies still under the eighteenth-century conditions of public ignorance and apathy, and the few men of first-rate genius whom England has nevertheless managed to produce have been systematically set aside in favour of foreign quacks and native blunderers. But in painting and architecture we have at least shown a capacity inferior to no European race since the Christian era: we are now beginning to succeed in decorative art; and to this remarkable and most encouraging success, achieved within little more than a hundred years, may be safely traced the main elements in the great place which the fine arts at present hold among us. They are no longer exotic: we begin with justice to rely upon ourselves; although not hitherto equal to France, we now march even, if not more than even, with any other European nation. Hence our endless exhibitions and galleries, and an endless stream of writing about

* A Lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, by F. T. PALGRAVE, late Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford.

them ; more money is probably spent on pictures in a year than was spent during the whole reign of George II. ; these arts have penetrated the nation already so far as to render our furniture, dresses, and public buildings infinitely more ornamental. This forms nine-tenths of what we hear so much of as "Ritualism ;" and if the national prosperity continues unchecked, the arts will possibly effect the greatest change of all, and redeem the reproach under which London lies of being the ugliest city in the universe.

All these things render it a matter of practical importance that the national taste, or judgment of art, should keep pace with the advances of art itself. Time need not be wasted in proving that the public taste, although it rarely does anything with a man of first-rate originality except misunderstand him, yet has a dominant influence over the general direction of artists, and that ignorance what to wish for and admire are thus of real injury. It seems too obvious for argument that we ought to have rules within ourselves to know how to choose or what to look at ; that, in short, it is an eminently desirable thing to have a good taste. The difficulty is that people often practically deny that there is any such thing in existence. It is true they acknowledge that taste is a substantive thing, ruled by definite laws, in general terms ; but the moment that any one disagrees with them, do they not cry, " That may be your taste, but mine is so and so ?" And if reasons are given for disagreement, we often hear " Tastes are not to be disputed " quoted with all the gravity which can be given by translating a foolish proverb from the Latin. These are precisely like the phrases used by the famous Sophists in Athens ; and the meaning of them always is, that every one's likings are to be a law for himself, and there is no other.

Against the popular doctrine, the one I wish to maintain is this very simple proposition, that in any sense useful for discussion, taste is knowledge. A little knowledge gives a little taste ; perfect taste would follow perfect knowledge. In other words, there is a correct and an incorrect in taste, a right and a wrong, independent of a person's individual likings. Should he plead, " This is my taste," he is only entitled to use the words if he can support his view by appeal to tangible or intelligible facts, perceptible to others not less than to himself, and which must lead every one who studies them to a *similar* (though not necessarily an *identical*) result. Such a man's taste is not fanciful or inexplicable, but follows a standard : it is not a blind faith, but something for which he can give a reason ; and the more reasons of fact he can show for every element in his preferences, the better his taste will be, and, I may add, the more numerous and intense his enjoyments.

It may be thought that public taste, so formed, would present a monotonous uniformity ; or that to reduce it to knowledge is in itself hostile to the " free spirit of art," or to the pleasure which it is the final object of all art to give. There is, however, no reason to fear such a uniformity. In speaking of taste as knowledge, I reserved above, " in any sense useful for

discussion." For in taste, as in every other branch of human knowledge whatever, it must always be presupposed that a person is born, or (to avoid a metaphysical dispute) at least emerges from childhood, with a certain natural inclination or bias towards the art or arts concerned. It is not every one who, with the best endeavours, can learn knowledge on a given subject, and even in those branches which lay least stress on individual gifts, and can be mastered by the largest average number of human beings—as mathematics, the acquisition of a modern language, or even as the use of a spade—the man without a natural turn makes to the last a poor and painful figure beside the one who was born to the subject. But that, conceding the natural bias, what remains depends on training and learning, is proved not only by obvious reasons, but by the examples of almost every human creature who has succeeded in any art or science or handicraft, from poetry to ploughing. I have elsewhere given some illustrations of this, and will here only add that if we put out of sight Shakspeare, of whose life we know almost nothing, and Burns, there is not one in the long and glorious roll of our poets, who was not a well-educated man in the common classical, sense of the word; whilst the list of the uneducated who have been known to try and fail, is hardly less numerous. The natural bias, without which nothing can be done, we cannot give; and hence the nine-tenths, as Locke called it, which comes to us all through education and knowledge, is clearly the only part which can be discussed to practical purpose. But the natural bias differs with every individual, indeed is precisely that which marks out every one's individuality; and hence, returning to art, there is no possibility that the greatest knowledge, uniformly diffused, would end in uniformity of taste. People are born to prefer red to blue, expression to action, figures to landscape, as they prefer burgundy to claret, or rhyme to blank verse; and tastes, to this degree, will differ to the end of the world. Even the Athenians, who of all human creatures made the nearest approach (through native quickness and acquired training) to absolute laws of taste, differed in their individual likings. But what would result from thorough knowledge in each case is a *reasoned* taste—the only permanent passion, as well as the one which gives most, and most unfastidious, pleasure. Thus people would retain their bias, but would have a satisfactory ground to give for it; they would judge under the same canon, in the same manner, and with the same correctness, although with results differing in accordance with their inborn preferences.

Having stated my general proposition, that taste is an educated instinct, and practically resolves itself into knowledge, I propose to carry this out into its practical application in regard to the different elements in a work of art which it may be desired to judge correctly. What are the kinds of knowledge which thus form or educate a good taste, and enable a man to make a trustworthy judgment? Without attempting to exhaust the question, I may name three kinds:—

I.

First may be put *knowledge of natural fact*, not perhaps as most important, but as the one which we begin unconsciously to learn earliest, and the one on which goodness in art, and hence soundness in judging it, fundamentally rest. Whatever art may try to express, and whatever species of imitation it may aim at giving (points which I shall come to presently), all art represents something that we have seen, or might see, have heard or might hear. Thus, in sculpture, taste will require knowledge mainly of human form and expression, and of the character and lines assumed by drapery; in figure-painting we add knowledge of colour, but rarely need so much familiarity with form; whilst in landscape how greatly taste may be advanced by acquaintance with natural facts has been exhibited on a splendid scale by Mr. Ruskin, whose analyses of the great features of the landscape have opened sources of the deepest and purest pleasure to hundreds, whilst infinitely facilitating the acquirement of good taste in this province of art. Knowledge of this kind is of particular use in qualifying us to detect the merit, or to discover the insufficiency of works by young artists, or by men unknown to us; it is not, as I will show presently, the only test, but it is one which no work, however great its reputation, or its other merits, can dispense with or ignore. When we see truth to natural fact regularly set aside, we may conclude with certainty that the artist is either simply more or less ignorant and incomplete, or that he is trying to deceive the spectator into a cheaply won admiration; or, finally, that he is a man of genius who neglects truth to fact in search after more intellectual qualities. Yet even in the last and incomparably the rarest case, (great genius being equally discreet, moderate, and truth-loving,) want of accuracy in natural truth must be regarded as something which lessens the nobility of Michael Angelo, and dims the glory of Turner.

It will also not be overlooked that if such knowledge is needful as a foundation for taste, it at the same time subserves another purpose of certainly not less importance. Every step we take to learn the facts of art leads us on to a more intelligent and a more delightful familiarity with nature. The book just alluded to is a magnificent example; we hardly know whether to be more grateful to Mr. Ruskin for the pleasure he has given us by interpreting landscape art, or for the charm he has added to our travels in France, Italy, and Switzerland.

II.

But fine art is not only an imitation, however correct, of natural facts. Even when it aims at recording some actual event or scene, it derives its main value from the sentiment with which the artist stamps it; much more when it presents an invention of the artist. We often

hear pictures praised for their luminous quality ; but the light in them only affects us because it has been coloured by transmission through the soul of man. So precious is this quality, that the sketch of a countenance must be feeble indeed which has not more charm and value in it than the very finest photograph ; for it is only mind that can really speak to mind. This law, which says only in other words, that man can know nothing except through simply human and " subjective " faculties, runs through life ; it assigns the rank in every field of human knowledge ; it is the great charter of education. Further, the powers of art are very limited : sculpture works without local colour ; the range of painting is as one octave compared to the organ compass of nature. Hence arises the second branch of knowledge requisite to form a correct taste : *knowledge of the natural conditions of each art*, in regard to the materials employed and to the great qualities of mind to some one or more of which every work must conform : knowledge, in short, of the laws of art as art, as our first division was knowledge of the facts on which art bases itself.

Acquaintance with the conditions most nearly concerns the artist himself ; what the spectator should feel being chiefly the limitations which are hence necessarily imposed on the work. Thus, as our pigments cannot approach the natural intensity of light or colour, we must not, like children, require the near objects or the sunny skies of a brightness which would throw other parts of the picture out of tune. Or, inasmuch as the painter's materials, however admirably handled, will never reach the expression of the face or its colour and texture, in their actual intensity, we learn that a nearer imitation of subordinate matters, as of dress, or fur, or small implements, is an error which throws the whole picture, so to speak, out of scale. These rules are sometimes called " conventional ; " a better word would be " rules of propriety." The same with sculpture : marble being a material of small tenacity, we should look for propriety, speaking of whole figures, (or " figures in the round," as they are properly called,) in an action expressing repose, or energy suspending itself for a moment, rather than in figures in active motion and with extended limbs or fluttering drapery ; whilst conversely in bronze, being a material of great tenacity, we may require much greater lightness in the mass, and a moderate increase in the display of attitude. These rules seem simple enough ; but it is enough to remind you of the sculpture in our last International Exhibition to show how little they are obeyed by the mass of artists, or of the fatal results of this want of conformity to the laws of the material : this ignorance of propriety. Greek art, which from its singular balance and perfection in all the essentials of excellence may always assist us greatly in learning how to judge, is particularly useful from the marvellous observance of propriety in every work, whether in its wholeness or in its details. And the lesson it teaches thus is of peculiar value, because propriety is the same in all ages, and applies as much to Gothic or to modern art as to that of ancient Athens. It is an essential touchstone of goodness and of the artist's right comprehension

of his work ; and the constant reference to it as a law is of more use than any other test in judging of architecture.

The branch of knowledge which one may call that of the moral or intellectual laws of art, is one which I can of course only indicate ; and the more willingly so, because it is a knowledge dependent more on the discipline we give our minds in general, than on any special study. If I may venture to say so, with great respect towards the many attempts which have been made, it does not appear possible to frame a catechism of beauty, or to reduce to tangible facts the ideas on which repose, breadth, unity, and sublimity depend, or define the exact limits of imagination and fancy. But it is not needful for my argument that I should attempt a task on which so much ability has been expended ; as it is generally acknowledged both that these ideas, and the qualities which express them in art, exist, and that the greater our knowledge of them the better is our taste. But I may add that it is here that a comparative study of art is of most value. Certain great masters have been conspicuous for their power in expressing one or other of these intellectual conditions or aspects of art, as Raphael for rendering grace, Titian for majestic repose, Velasquez for vital truth, Reynolds for tenderness, Turner for unity and humanity, as it may be called, of sentiment in landscape. From their works, as from the correlative expression of similar qualities in poetry and music, we may learn not only what these qualities are, but how and under what limitations they can be rendered by the hand of genius.

The combination of these qualities forms what is meant by *style* : and it is better expressed or thought of thus than under such terms as "idealism," "realism," "generalization," and the like ; phrases which may indeed be used as true classifications of certain styles, but which are very apt to become catchwords and lead us astray, and are too often the refuges of ignorant or unfair judgment, or found in the mouth of merely theoretical or literary critics.

By these tests we may, finally, try whether anything belongs to the great classes of "high" or "low" art ; a distinction upon which partisan feeling has wasted a vast amount of controversy.

"If we apply the test of style," says a recent writer, "we shall find that a work of so-called high art is not properly such in virtue of its subject and conception, but only of the co-equal excellence of its representation. If there is a great conception and a corresponding greatness of representation, the work is a work both of mind and of art the highest possible. If there is only a great conception, without a great representation to correspond, it is not a work of excellent art at all, but only the indication of a capacious or ambitious mind. Similarly, the domestic picture, or other transcript of fact, may be a work of truly fine art, if the style is fine ; while, failing this, it will sink at best into the class of simple accuracy of treatment, or may even lack that, and only amuse the popular

eye because it is something with whose subject matter the spectator is familiar and sympathetic. We may thus free ourselves finally from any admiration or toleration of so-called high art practised by small artists, and from any depreciation of low art practised by able artists; at the same time that we shall in no wise confound the real and large distinction which exists between the forms of art, but shall recognize that the greatly choosing, conceiving, and representing artist is a man of essentially higher calibre than the one who makes a small choice, and conceives and represents his subject with even the utmost excellence of which it is susceptible." *

It will be observed that the kinds of knowledge required to form the judge of art are nearly the same in kind, though not in degree, as those required to form the artist. This follows from the obvious rule that to understand a thing one must know what the aim of the doer of it was, and under what laws and limitations he did it. But there is another and a further reason, which it may be worth while to notice. Although for practical purposes it is desirable to draw a strong line between the practitioners of any art and the general world for whose benefit they work, yet this clear and strong line does not exist in nature. That which makes the poet the poet is not really a gift altogether peculiar and distinct from what his fellow-men possess. Every one who feels what he reads has in him, so far, an actual share in the "inspiration" which produced it. He may even have had by natural birthright a very large share of that inspiration, which from external circumstances may never have been cultivated in the fields of productivity. Hence Gray's well-known stanza in his *Elegy*, on the "mute inglorious Milton;" and Wordsworth's impassioned apostrophe, "O, many are the poets." Similarly of the Fine Arts, using the phrase in the narrower sense which, in the absence of a better, I have employed to-night. The majestic truth of a Phidias, the poetical invention and power of a Flaxman or a Woolner, are born again, as it were, in their degree, within those who study their works in the spirit which produced them. Those who sympathise with the grace of Raphael, as if it were an audible music within them, or feel the poetry and magic of Turner, with a force of pleasure almost physical in its intensity, are so far Raphael and Turner themselves.

Of course in saying this I am not desirous of concealing the vast gulf which, when we look from judging and enjoying to creating, separates the poet or artist from the world outside. On the contrary, there is nothing which I would more strenuously maintain than that the line is "hard and fast," and the chasm totally beyond bridging, which parts the practised hand or intellect from the unpractised—especially as the strongest natural bias generally goes with the irresistible tendency to practise it. Indeed, for the assertion of that law which I have elsewhere had occasion to make,

* I quote this from the ablest recent work of criticism on art which has appeared in England, Mr. Wm. Rossetti's volume of *Essays*, published by Messrs. Macmillan.

I have been complimented by the most hearty abuse from several amateurs—whether so professedly, or disguising their incompetence under academic titles—whom I have criticised upon this ground. But these considerations may assist us to clear up a popular error upon the subject of taste. It may naturally be argued, If the knowledge which forms the judge be also, in a great degree, that which forms the artist, the artist adding practice to theory, and being also presumably gifted with the stronger natural bias, should be also the best judge of art. Hence the phrase, "Every one is a judge in his own art"—the real truth of which is to be found if we add "in all technical points." Here, of course, the rule is absolute. But it is quite otherwise when the rule is extended to the results of any branch of art or science. These are addressed to mankind at large, to please, to elevate, or to benefit them; and of their success in these aims mankind is the judge, not a jury of experts. The claim to be sole judges as to all points concerning their work, however natural in the mouth of every profession, must therefore be respectfully rejected, whether it be made by poets about poetry, scientific men about physical science, or (as in the Middle Ages) by the clergy about theology. These claims, at the bottom, all belong to the general class of pretensions to infallibility, and in the name of human freedom must be disallowed. That, in art at least, they cannot be sustained, may most easily be proved by the comparatively small amount of valuable criticism (except of a technical order) which artists have given, especially when measured against the considerable amount of criticism which in lectures, essays, letters, and sayings they have attempted. One great reason for this failure no doubt lies in the many sects into which art has always been divided, beyond the bounds of which the individual artist, by the fact of his devotion to it, is unable to look. But another ground for this comparative failure may be found in the very community of nature (if I may be allowed the phrase) between the artist and those who have disciplined their minds to appreciate him. The really trained man of taste has the same gifts, but has not similarly directed them. Thus (admitting always that on technical points his judgment will be entirely inferior) he may reasonably expect that in taking a correct general view of any art, and in perceiving the merits of any work as a source of pleasure, he may surpass the artist in competency. He has more time to give to such study; he can survey the whole field, without the temptation of dwelling too much on minor technical points; and it is his own fault or indolence if he takes up the position of a partisan. The one, in short, trains his faculty for creating, the other for judging; and as the judge would be an indifferent artist, so it is hardly to be expected that the artist shall also be eminent as a judge. This, however, does not preclude us from acknowledging that the man who should be at once a first-rate artist, and at the same time equally trained in literature, and free to devote his time to the work, would bring to it the highest qualifications. But, in fact, the pleasure of creating is so high, the impulse so imperative, that this ideal combination has never yet

occurred ; and highly for the benefit of the human race is it that it has been so ! *

That the general feeling and unconscious criticism of a country do work powerfully upon the art of it, regarded as a whole, is certain. This reflection of the mind of all upon the work of some is, in fact, as I shall directly point out, one of the most curious and important facts in the history of all the Fine Arts. What we are concerned with, as rational creatures devoted to the advance of our country in every way, is, that the critical influence shall be thoroughly disciplined.

III.

The third branch of knowledge I have to mention, though valuable in forming a correct taste, is, perhaps, of more direct value as a means of enlarging our pleasure in art. This consists in *acquaintance with the history and mental conditions of the age or country to which a work belongs*. Thus the peculiar excellence and equally peculiar limitations exhibited by the earlier Italian painters cannot fairly be estimated without knowledge of the time when they worked, or of their close dependence upon the types of design invented by the Byzantine painters, who, in their turn, were much influenced by traditions and feelings derived from the art of ancient Greece. Or again, we judge the Flemish school, especially its great master, the mighty Rembrandt, unfairly if we require from these painters the qualities and aims which suited mediæval art, but had then died away ; or the modern French school, unless we look to the literature and military or political history of the country. For all art ultimately reflects the national mind, and is living and powerful in proportion as it reflects it. But this line of study, valuable as it is in regard to the history of art, and interesting in the highest degree from the great passions and events through which it leads us, is of less importance in forming a correct taste than the others which I have noticed. For these large forces are mainly visible when we survey art on an extended scale ; in weighing the merit of an individual work they enter much less into view, and when they do, (as in ancient religious works,) I think we generally make proper allowance for them, and throw ourselves, perhaps unconsciously, into the spirit of the age, so far at least as to do justice to the work as a simple matter of art. Indeed the resolution of the fine arts into a reflection of the national mind, important and fruitful a doctrine as it is in a historical or biographical survey, is a doctrine which requires great reserve and delicacy in its application, lest we should forget that the arts display, above all, the free play of the faculties, and are the especial field in which human individuality has always shown itself. Their historical aspect

* The *Century of Painters of the English School*, by Messrs. R. and S. REDGRAVE, (Smith, Elder and Co., 1866,) may be properly here noticed as one of the ablest pieces of criticism on art by artists which we possess, not less than as a book of singular interest, and executed with sense and ability.

(like the parallel and larger doctrine which resolves history in general into the evolution of social laws) is easily exaggerated into extravagance and fancifulness, and pressed into the service of a shallow dogmatism, of which the clever essays by M. Taine afford the most conspicuous recent examples. :

Such appear to me to be the chief kinds of knowledge or of discipline which—presupposing always some natural bias for us to cultivate—are the material and intellectual conditions required to form good taste. The amount of each which we may take the pains to acquire, and the impartiality with which we apply them in trying to judge separate works of art, determine the degree and the certainty of taste; and although it is, as I have said, neither possible nor desirable that natural bias should be suppressed, yet the judgments thus resulting will be framed on a safe and definite system, and produce what is much better in all human spheres of thought or feeling than uniformity—unity. I do not maintain that it is a more easy thing to form a good taste in art than it is to form a good judgment on any subject of interest to us as human creatures; what I do maintain is, that it is just as possible to form it. Nor would I assert that more certainty can be attained here than that relative degree which is our limit in almost every direction of human knowledge; only that we can, by taking similar pains, reach it. The main points are, to feel that there is a good and a bad in art, just as decisively as there are in human conduct, and that a practical and intelligible reason, valid for every rational mind, may be given for our judgment in each case. A work of art will be good in proportion as it is true to natural fact, conformable to the laws of its material, and capable of giving high, pure, and lasting pleasure (a condition which includes suitability to its own age) to the spectator who brings a fair degree of knowledge and attention to the study of it. What this mode of looking at taste obviously requires is, the submission of individual first likings and fancies to the larger laws of judgment. To say, "I like it, because I like it," is simply a confession that we will not take pains to learn, or have not sense enough to put aside a partial pleasure for the larger, deeper, and more lasting pleasure which is founded on thorough judgment, and has no other foundation. It is with the formation of good taste as it is with the formation of goodness in character; if one motto for our study be patience, the other must be self-renunciation. Undisciplined preferences, one-sided likings, may be amusing, and even innocent, but they are not taste.

To sum up: the end of all the fine arts is the same; pure, high, and enduring pleasure. The end of taste is then to discover which are those works of art by which such pleasure will be best afforded. The purity of the pleasure depends most upon the intellectual qualities of the art; the intensity upon the qualities which refer to human sentiment, and to its exact adaptation to the feelings of our own age; the enduringness upon its truth to nature in the widest sense of the term. These elements

answer to the three main branches of knowledge which we have to acquire in order to form a correct taste. Such a taste undoubtedly aims at a high, nay, at what might perhaps be called a severe standard. It does not hesitate to say *good* or *bad*; or to dismiss with legitimate scorn many triumphs of flashy vulgarity or facile commonplace. But it would be the greatest mistake to imagine that it will therefore be exclusive, if pure, and narrow if intense. The exact contrary is almost always the truth. The refinement of mind which results from our labour is the precise opposite to the miserable temper of fastidiousness; this often pretends to be taste, but is rather its caricature; it is the consecration of petty individual fancies in place of the patient discipline to absolute facts; it is the selfish principle opposed to the principle of self-renunciation. But all experience leads to the conviction that taste becomes wide in exact proportion to its refinement. No people appreciate minor merits, modest beauties, half so much as those who know exactly where to place them. Nay, even things decidedly second-rate are never so highly, as well as so justly, valued as by those whose taste is formed on the great and severe standard. I could give a hundred examples of this law, if I could make one hour into six. Mr. Ruskin, for instance, though perhaps justly open to some charge of onesidedness in his adverse judgment of the Renaissance painters and architects, has yet pointed out the merits of Claude and of San Micheli with a penetration beyond that of any of their professed admirers. So in music; who enjoys simple tunes with half the intensity of those whose highest pleasure is in the great composers? When any one says, "I am not up to your mighty sonatas, but I delight in 'The Last Rose of Summer,'" we know at once that this implies a feeble musical sensibility, and play "Jolly Dogs" at once, if we have it in the music-stand. It is a Haydn or a Beethoven who values the "Scotch" airs most deeply, as well as most judiciously. In architecture again, no one has done such justice to the most widely differing or the most obscure styles as Mr. Fergusson, to whom we owe the admirably comprehensive history which puts the art upon a scientific foundation, and gives new eyes to the traveller who has studied it in every city he enters. So of poetry, in which (if my own experience may be appealed to,) I have never met with a judge more alive to lesser points of skill and beauty than the author of *Maud* and *In Memoriam*. But there is nothing to surprise in all this: it is the natural and constant result and reward of a correct taste. Knowledge carries its own blessings with it on all sides; enlarges the mind, whilst it strengthens it: intensifies the sight, whilst purifying it. Thus, the more we learn to value wisely, the more liberally we learn to value:

Instructed, that true wisdom leads to love.

Coast Defence.

Six months ago we discussed in this Magazine a question which at that time engaged a good deal of attention—the question of Iron Forts and Shields.* The history of the application of iron to land defences from the wrought-iron bars proposed by General Ford in 1827, down to the commencement of the present year, was, as we were unfortunately only too well able to show, a series of half-hearted and incomplete attempts to deal with the subject, and of failure more or less complete, culminating in that completest failure of all, the Gibraltar shield. But at the time we wrote, the subject had been taken up by the press with a characteristic earnestness, not altogether free in some instances from exaggeration, not always tempered or directed by technical knowledge, but which, by dint of sheer perseverance and some rough and ready criticism, accomplished in a few months that which the careless work of many previous years had failed to carry through. We have at least, we may hope, during these six months got beyond the region of failures and guess-work. Not only has the Gibraltar shield been referred to a special committee, but two other committees have been deputed to carry out the investigation of the whole question. One of these committees, under the presidency of Admiral Sir F. Grey, is now engaged in examining the various fortifications, and the designs of proposed forts, with a view to suggesting such alterations and improvements as may appear necessary, and of appraising officially the value and trustworthiness of some of the more sweeping statements respecting the condition of the works in progress to which the busy discussion that we have referred to gave rise.

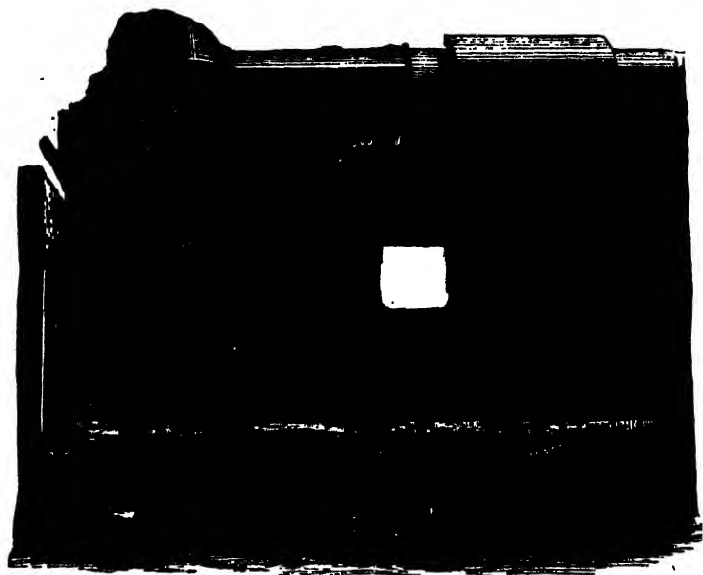
The task of working out the structural details of the problem, of saying how iron can be best and most economically applied, and whether the measure of resistance adopted for particular forts is sufficient and satisfactory, has been confided to the Ordnance Select Committee, reinforced for the occasion by the association with them of two Engineer officers and of Professors Abel and Percy.

Under these auspices, the question is now receiving an amount of systematic attention which has hitherto been denied it; and for the first time we have a prospect of seeing the defensive application of iron to land defences worked out with something of the care and scientific completeness which its importance demands. The late experiments at Shoeburyness were in themselves a considerable step in this direction, and furnish us with some valuable data as to the present, and suggest some speculations as to the future of this large problem.

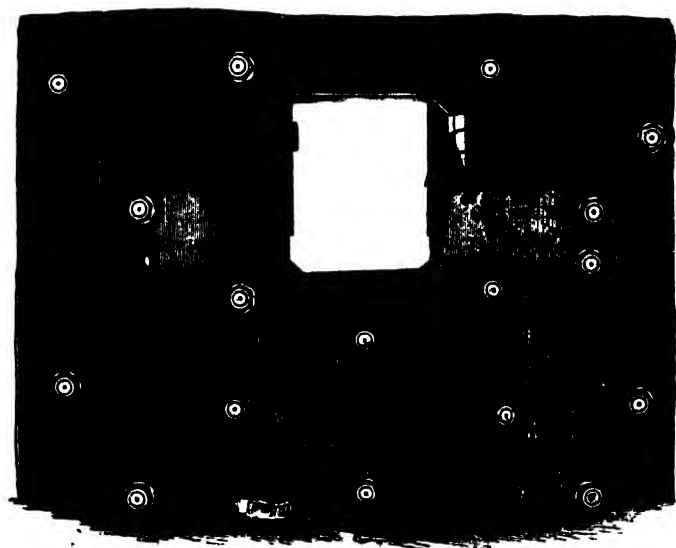
* *Cornhill Magazine*, February, 1868.

The principal object of attack was a section of the Plymouth Breakwater Fort, of which a duplicate is to be erected at Bermuda. This fort, like the Gibraltar shield, is constructed upon the stratified, or iron upon iron system; but there were between the Plymouth and the Gibraltar shield these points of essential difference, that whereas in the latter the system was applied in a manner which could hardly result otherwise than in failure,—whereas, the iron was insufficient in quantity, the structure was wanting in elasticity or absorbent power, and all previous experience had been, as it would seem, perversely disregarded,—in the Plymouth fort it was precisely the reverse. The amount of iron was rather beyond, at least quite up to, the powers of the strongest guns brought against it; undue rigidity was got rid of by the judicious introduction of all sorts of absorbent and anti-concussive materials, such as leather and lead between the plates, wooden buffers at intervals, and wooden packings and elastic washers to the bolts; and, finally, the experience of the most recent trials had been so largely taken advantage of and so carefully applied, that critics who had before objected that the shields were constructed in defiance of all practical warnings, now found a point of attack in the fact that the structure which formed the subject of the late experiments represented a construction, as they affirmed, vastly superior to the proposed fort, and therefore afforded no true measure of its strength or resisting powers. It may be as well to state in passing that the Plymouth fort is not yet built, and that the section which was erected and experimented upon at Shoeburyness does really and actually represent, in all important particulars, the fort as it is now proposed to erect it, except perhaps that the fort may possibly be made even somewhat stronger than the Shoeburyness representative target. The target consisted of an iron casemate, composed of 15 inches of iron, in three layers of 5 inches thick (*see* plan p. 187); and over one face an additional 5-inch plate had been placed to illustrate the proposed method of strengthening the fort, which would be adopted if the after-development of artillery powers should seem to render such strengthening desirable. The roof of the casemate was built up with concrete and earth allied with iron. The embrasure is so far weaker than the embrasures in the proposed fort inasmuch as it is larger, not being adapted for muzzle-pivoting guns. The experimental front is straight, instead of being a piece cut out of a curved fort; and here and there some slight alterations of the true design have been introduced to compensate for the want of continuity.

Against this structure the four heaviest English rifled guns, the 12, 10, 9, and 7-inch guns, together with the American 15-inch smooth-bore, were placed in battery. A question arose as to the distance at which the attack should be carried on. Looking to the fact that the structure represented an actual and not an imaginary fort, one which is to be built in a position unapproachable by hostile ships within 500 yards, it had been decided to assign 500 yards as the minimum limit of possible attack. But Sir John Pakington misconceiving, as we think,



FRONT VIEW OF PLYMOUTH FORT TARGET AFTER THE PRACTICE
OF THE 16TH, 17TH, AND 18TH JUNE, 1868.



BACK VIEW OF PLYMOUTH FORT TARGET AFTER THE PRACTICE
OF THE 16TH, 17TH, AND 18TH JUNE.

the whole object of the experiment, mistaking the section of an actual fort for a mere experimental structure designed to exhibit the ultimate resistance of three thicknesses of 5-inch iron, decided, at the last moment, to alter the programme, and to carry out the experiment at 200 yards range; thereby subjecting the target to a test which it had not been anticipated it would be required to stand. This decision has been a good deal criticised, and we think rightly so. There is no necessity for requiring a fort to resist more than it can possibly be called upon to resist in actual warfare; indeed, on the score of expense, it is improper to do so. Among the first conditions, therefore, to be determined in connection with the construction of a fort are, where shall it be erected, and to what sort of an attack is it likely to be exposed? The site of the Plymouth fort had certainly been determined—indeed, had preceded the determination to erect a fort at all; and it is reasonable to assume that the engineers had designed it with reference to some definite amount of battering which it might be required to endure. These are two elementary conditions or data which necessarily enter into the design of any fort not purely experimental or imaginary; and as the *range* of possible attack largely enters into the second of these conditions, it seems to us to be in the last degree unfair and unscientific to require a structure after it has been erected—nay, after it has been years in process of incubation and erection, and at last stands ready to be fired at—to resist an attack of much greater severity (by reason of the reduction in range) than that which, rightly or wrongly, it was designed to sustain. Fortunately, however, the engineers had in this instance been careful to err on the side of strength. The fort exhibited a very considerable measure of resistance to these heavy guns at the short range of 200 yards. During the first three days' practice, on two occasions only was penetration effected, and on each occasion the shell which got through struck upon a spot wounded and weakened by previous rounds. In one or two places portions of the inner planks were broken off, and thrown with dangerous violence to the rear; but, as the largest of these pieces was effectually stopped by the rope mantlet which in the actual fort would in action be always suspended within the embrasure for the better protection of the gunners, it is reasonable to assume that, had the mantlet been *in situ* during the whole of the experiments, the langridge and missile matter delivered off by the broken plates would in all cases have been stopped. The protection afforded by this rope mantlet (which unfortunately was not in position during the first day's firing) was one of the noteworthy features of the experiment.

On the whole, the result must be regarded as satisfactory. When we recollect that the attack was carried on under circumstances the most unfavourable to the defence; at the shortest possible, or we might say at an impossible, range; with guns more powerful than any which a foreign fleet could at this moment—or probably for years to come—bring against us; with all the advantages due to careful and the most experienced laying, and the impact of projectiles mathematically perpendicular to the

face of the target ; without smoke ; without confusion ; without any reply from the guns of the fort ; and with such deliberation and advantages, generally, as could proceed only from the assumption that the opposing vessel was invulnerable, or more so than the fort—an assumption the very opposite of the fact ; when the whole conditions of the trial are borne in mind, and the results are observed of two long days' firing, in the course of which an energy of about 114,152-foot tons was expressed upon the target* (see plates, p. 188), we may assert, with tolerable confidence, that the Plymouth fort, as it is proposed to erect it, will be practically invulnerable by an enemy's guns. Two more days' battering, on the 7th and 8th July, go to confirm this view. Such damage as was done upon these days was done by virtue, in great measure, of previous bruises. Even a salvo from three of the great guns failed to injure the fort otherwise than locally, and a 10-inch shell, which wreaked great destruction over the port-hole, expressed rather the damage due to four rounds than to one. Other trials have established that the fort would be practically invulnerable also by an enemy's mortars. This is as it should be ; and we the more willingly bear testimony to this result because, when we last had occasion to discuss the handiwork of the fortification branch, we were compelled to write in a different strain.

Incidentally, a good deal of light was thrown upon several vexed questions in connection with guns and forts by this trial. It was established that undue rigidity might be got rid of by the interposition of wood and elastic materials at intervals—by the employment of Major Palliser's "stretching-bolts"—and by the use of iron of a good soft quality. That is to say, the Plymouth fort, in which these points had been carefully and sufficiently attended to, proved, if not absolutely indestructible by "racking," at least only remotely vulnerable to this form of attack. It was, in fact, scarcely racked at all, notwithstanding the concentrated effects of so many powerful projectiles expressed upon a target too strong to be penetrated, and, therefore, specially exposed to concussive damage.

The inferiority of the American gun to our own rifled guns, if it needed further confirmation, received it strikingly in the course of these trials. The Rodman gun, beyond making some large indents in the face of the outer plates, did nothing. It broke nothing—it penetrated nothing—it did not even shake the structure in the sense of materially injuring it ; nor did it, we believe, damage a single bolt or fastening. On the other hand, what guns could do, that our guns did. Where penetration became possible they penetrated. Where there existed a weak part in the structure they searched it out, and left their mark. Whatever injury was done to the inside of the target by the fracturing of the inside planks, whatever injury was done to the bolts, whatever imaginary injury was done to the imaginary defenders, in every case was wrought, not by the great American gun, firing fancy charges at a range the most favourable to its effect, but by the

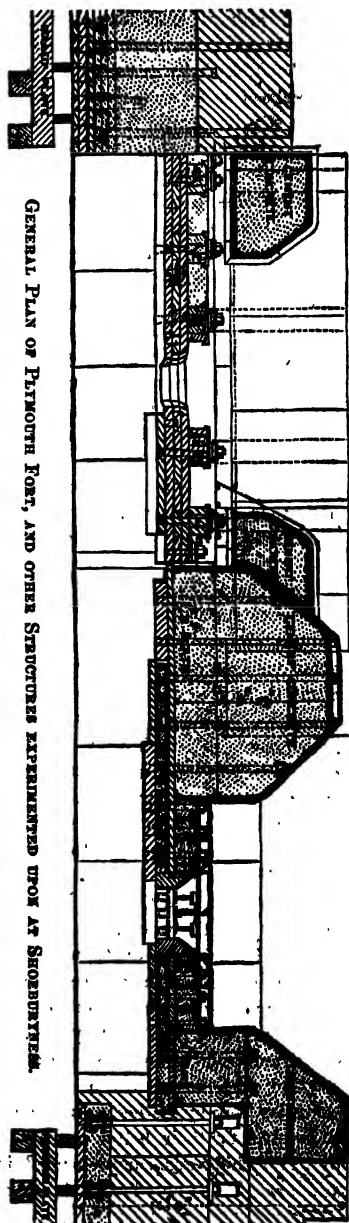
* Some deduction must be made on account of the rounds which struck the 20-inch (or experimental) portion of the shield.

English guns, firing honest service charges, and at a range the least favourable (on account of the greater *sustained* power) for comparison of these guns with their American rival. Many Americans witnessed this experiment. Among them was a distinguished American general, who, chancing to overhear a conversation on the ground as to the relative merits of the English and American guns, turned sharply round on one who was expressing an opinion adverse to the Rodman, and said, "And pray, sir, what may you have to say of our gun?" "I have this to say," was the reply, "that comparing it with our 10-inch rifled gun it is less wieldy; it discharges a heavier shot; it has been fired with heavier charges, and charges which can never be fired from it without risk; and yet, with all these points in its favour, it is useless against even a moderately strong target at 200 yards range." "Well," said the American general, turning on his heel, "that's about the opinion I've always held of the gun." The reply was unexpected; but, in truth, it need not have been so. The Americans are far less bigoted on this subject than many Englishmen. They have long since taken the measure of their guns. They know their history. They know why they were introduced—as the readiest available solution of the problem how to produce big guns, at a time when big guns, of one sort or another, were a vital necessity, and when defences and armour-clad ships were not what they are now. But the Americans are far too acute a people to imagine that a system of ordnance improvised to meet an emergency is equal to that system which we at our leisure, during long years of peace, and at great cost, have brought to something very like perfection.

Granting that the Plymouth fort is a stout, useful structure, the question remains, is it the best which we can procure for the money? That is a question which the late experiments do not enable us to answer, except in an uncertain speculative way. We should be inclined to infer from these experiments that this particular application of iron, however good, is not the most profitable—for that, after all, is the way to put it—which could be contrived. We cannot, at all events, feel satisfied on this point until it has been more fully worked out; indeed, it has not yet been worked out at all. And yet it is well worth it. Upon the iron fortification of this country much money will have to be expended. If we can see our way to a saving of 5, 10, 15, or 20 per cent., with an increase of efficiency, the experiments which may lead to this conclusion will not have been thrown away. Upon this point—upon what we may call the future of the subject, as contradistinguished from its present embodiment in the Plymouth fort—the late trials, except negatively, taught us nothing. They showed that 15 inches, disposed as in the Plymouth fort, furnishes an exceedingly effective defence; as effective, perhaps, as any reasonable man, not an iron-master, could desire. But it is a costly system; and if 10 or 12 inches of iron can be made to go as far, with no greater constructive difficulties or expense, the saving will be very appreciable.

Negatively, as we have said, the late experiments did teach us something. They taught us, as we read them, the lesson that a solid mass of iron set in comparison with the same thickness stratified,* is relatively, all things taken into account, inferior. That we believe to have been the impression of every one who saw the hammered iron 15-inch plate split into two pieces at the second, and the rolled 15-inch plate at the fourth blow. The advantages of the stratified structure are economy, simplicity, and facility of construction; more uniform distribution of the weak parts, facilities of transport, repair and strengthening; greater uniformity of material, and more competition in the trade; and these advantages very much more than counterbalance the slightly greater penetrative resistance presented by the solid plate, supposing it to be of the best quality. Therefore we say that, with our recent experiments staring us in the face, the employment of solid blocks of iron may be no longer advocated.

But because solid blocks of iron will not do, it does not follow that the application of 5-inch plates (with planks of the same thickness occasionally introduced) which has been adopted for the Plymouth fort, is the very best possible. At all events, as we have said, it has not been proved to be the best, and this is a point which must now be set at rest at once and for ever. The present aspect of the question, and the energy with which it is being pursued, give us some grounds for hoping that pursuit will not be abandoned until the problem of the use of iron for land forts has been



solved with at least the approximate completeness which marked its solution, as far as floating defences are concerned, some years ago. What we should do is by means of a series of inductive experiments to resolve the subject as far as may be into its elements, to obtain a clear grasp of the first principles in this as in other sciences, and afterwards to apply these principles as circumstances may recommend.

We do not know that the trial of the other experimental structures at Shoeburyness has lighted us far on this road. Beyond learning that concrete as a backing to iron plates is little better than so much sand, and that a thin iron screen is very much less effective than a rope mantlet for stopping fragments, we have learnt but little from the trial of the War Office casemate—a structure which embodies various applications of iron, including some arrangements of the much talked of stringer backing—(see plan, p. 187.) The structure is perhaps capable of furnishing more useful practical results than those which were derived from it if the experiments be otherwise conducted; and we trust that before we have done with this shield, it will have furnished us with some data for our future guidance equivalent in value to the cost of its erection. But this casemate by no means embodies the most promising applications of armour, and other typical constructions will have to be experimented upon before the subject can be regarded as even approximately exhausted. And especially do we desire to see trial made of a wood or compound backing; and of a system of intermediate compound backing, such as has, we understand, been proposed by Mr. Chalmers.

But we must now turn to another side of the subject altogether. Large questions are apt, in the course of popular discussion, to assume cramped, artificial limits, and to present an appearance not otherwise than deceptive. Like the figures on the zoetrope, their infinite varieties and the elements of which they are made up, become merged by constant repetition into one unvarying representation, which dances before the public eye with an appearance of reality and completeness which, to men looking at it idly or with no special knowledge, is well calculated to mislead. People thus get to know a subject by a sign rather than comprehensively. They take the initial letter, or one syllable, for the whole word; until in time they are left with something incomplete and fractional to do duty for the whole. To many, perhaps to most persons, the question of coast defence is so continually recurring in the guise of an iron shield, or an iron fort, that they cease to distinguish, if indeed they ever recognized, its other numerous phases, or to understand that the iron fort or shield is one feature only of a great system. For, after all, the shield or fort is a contrivance merely for obtaining protection, and holds very much the same position with regard to a complete system of defence that was held centuries back by the body-armour and shields with which men encumbered themselves for their better security. The soldier then did not consider that everything was comprehended in the stoutness or excellence of his armour. To be an effective fighting man, to be something a little better

than a helpless tortoise with a thick shell, or a rhinoceros with a thick hide, he required to look to his weapons, to his agility, and proficiency in the use of them, and to consider himself in relation to his comrades and their plans of battle, and as forming a unit in a chain of defence or attack. His armour had to be designed with reference to these things—with reference to the facilities which it afforded him for using his arms and his legs, of retaining his place in the ranks, of exerting at once that individual gallantry and that sort of fractional prowess which it is given to one man acting among many to exert. The man's armour was required therefore not merely to fit him as an individual, but to fit into its proper place in the system or chain of defence of which its wearer formed one of the links, of which itself was one of the rivets. These considerations have a bearing upon the question of iron forts, and upon the larger question of coast defence. They suggest that the fact is not a thing to be considered solely by and for itself, but in reference and subordination to a variety of other conditions. They suggest that a particular application or weight of iron may misfit a position exactly as a suit of chain armour may have been too large or too small or too heavy for a particular soldier. Each position needs to be carefully measured for its armour as the soldier of old was measured for his helmet or his breast-plate, and as sportsmen, nowadays, measure the length or bend of their gun-stock. As the suit to be supplied had to be made with reference to the soldier's strength and physique, with reference to the part which he was required to perform in the battle, with reference, finally, to the length of his purse, so now, a casemate may be unnecessarily and extravagantly strong for a position, or the structure may needlessly be costly, or it may be unsuited to the part which the position to be defended would be required to fulfil in repelling an attack. Therefore must the construction of each fort be considered on its separate merits, and not with reference to some ideal universal standard of strength, or to one unvarying pattern.

But the analogy is instructive also if we apply it otherwise. The armourer's craft does no more now than in the early days comprise the whole science of defence. And in some positions now, as then, it may be desirable not to make use of armour at all. The money which would have to be expended on iron forts may, under many circumstances, be far more profitably applied in other directions. Therefore, in working out the subject of coast defences, it is of the highest importance not to concentrate our attention too exclusively upon the iron fort side of it. Happily, whatever the public may have done, our engineers and military officials do not appear to have fallen into this error; and their attention is at present directed to two subjects of great importance in connection with the defence of our shores. One of these subjects is the possible employment of earth-works in place of iron, in certain positions; the other is the perfecting of a system of marine obstructions.

The importance of employing earth or sand, in preference to iron, as a material for fortifications is to be measured not merely by the economy

which, in many positions, such a change would effect, but by the greater efficiency of the earth parapet wherever practicable. On this last point, Colonel von Scheliha, in his work on *Coast Defence*, gives us, as the results of the late American experience, some valuable information. Among his general deductions he includes the following: "All officers of the navy, and of the corps of engineers, who, during the American war, had opportunities for gaining practical experience in the attack on, and defence of, positions along the coast, no matter on which side they gained this experience, agree that sand or earth is the cheapest and best material that could be used in the construction of batteries."* Colonel von Scheliha supports this very decided statement by reference to a number of engagements during the American war, among which, the defence of Vicksburg, and of Forts Wagner and Fisher, stand conspicuous. But the use of earth-works for coast defence is sometimes attended with serious difficulties. In the first place, when the forts have to be erected on shoals, on artificial sea foundations, in the centre of a harbour, or sea-way, or on narrow strips of land,—wherever, indeed, expensive foundations have to be erected, or space has to be narrowly considered, earthen parapets become, if not inadmissible, at least undesirable and disproportionately expensive. The site of the Plymouth breakwater fort is an example of this sort of position; and in such sites iron must still be used. But elsewhere, where space and foundations, and similar considerations do not come into play, the mind almost instinctively reverts to earthworks as the best material for fortifications. It is a material against which guns may cannonade for weeks, or for months, as at Sebastopol; and a night's diligence will repair all the injury. How comes it, then, that earthworks have lately been elbowed so unceremoniously out of fashion, and their places usurped by walls of iron? The answer is not far to seek. A parapet, whether of earth or sand, iron or masonry, of what material soever it be made, must be furnished with some means for the guns to fire out of or over. The commonest means is the embrasure,—a hole, a ready-made breach in the parapet, through which the gun may fire. But embrasures are, admittedly, so many points of weakness and exposure. They invite attack, and draw fire. They are peculiarly liable to injury, by the concussive effects of their own guns, the destructive effects of the guns of the enemy, and even by the mere stress of weather. Moreover, they largely limit the effective power of the guns which it is intended to employ, by diminishing their lateral range, and restricting it to the angle defined by the splay of the embrasure—a point in the construction which, in its turn, is governed by considerations of strength. Consequently, in these days of rifled guns, with their great accuracy, penetration, and range, it has come to be regarded an established necessity to employ iron at the embrasures in the form of a shield—the Gibraltar shield, for example,—by which some of the more salient evils of an embrasure in earth may be avoided. Indeed, the simple

* *Coast Defence*, p. 44.

revetted embrasure may be regarded as a thing of the past for permanent works of importance, and, in its place, has become established an iron embrasure of one sort or another. That is one way of firing from behind earthen parapets. Another is the system of barbette batteries, in which the gun is placed in such a position that it is able to fire over the parapet. By this arrangement the protection afforded to the guns and gunners is obviously less complete than when the guns are placed *en embrasure*. But, on the other hand, the advantages of the barbette battery are considerable. Guns so placed possess a perfectly unrestricted lateral range, and one gun will thus represent three or four firing through embrasures. Iron is not necessary. The continuity of defence is preserved. The necessity for repair becomes less frequent. But the protection, as we have said, is less; and in view of the increased powers of rifled-artillery fire the simple barbette battery is generally regarded as having become nowadays a practical impossibility. On this point, again, Colonel von Scheliha speaks very plainly: "Guns mounted *en barbette*," he tells us, "may be silenced by an inferior number of guns brought against them."* More passages to the same effect occur in this work, and reference is made to more than one action which seems practically to prove a case which might almost be accepted as proven on theoretical considerations alone. In very elevated positions, where they are of less easy application, barbette batteries may still perhaps be occasionally employed, but they will no longer be advocated for extensive general use by intelligent engineers.

The choice between embrasures and barbettes is thus a choice between greater expence and greater protection on the one hand, and increased lateral play, or gun-power, with reduced protection, on the other.

Then we come to a sort of compromise between the two, in the shape of the turret, which may be regarded as a moveable embrasure facing in whatever direction may be desired. But the turret, although it thus gives us the free lateral range and fully developed power of the barbette gun, exhibits the defects of the fixed shield or embrasure in a modified degree. It possesses also disadvantages peculiar to itself. The labour entailed in causing a turret to revolve after each shot is fired from it; its liability, however reduced by ingenious mechanical contrivances, to get out of order; its exposure to the impact of hostile shot; the inconvenience due to fighting in an exceedingly narrow casemate; and, finally, its prodigious cost, † all render a turret for land defence a contrivance to be adopted only in positions of first-rate importance, and where no other defence will usefully serve.

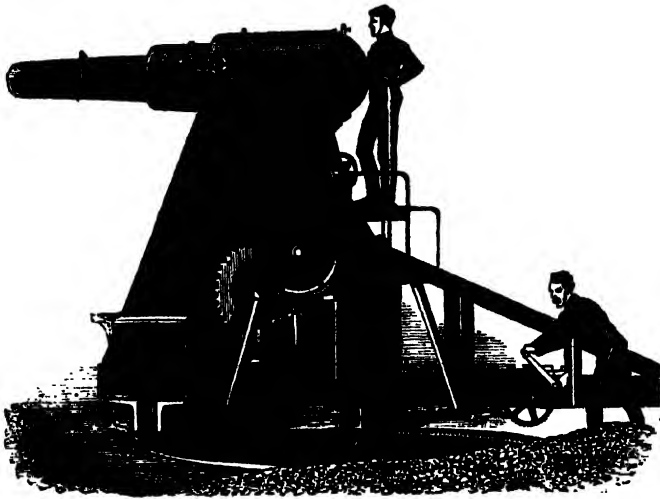
These are all so many systems of local defence; but through them all we scarcely see a clue to the practical employment for permanent works

* *Coast Defence*, p. 44.

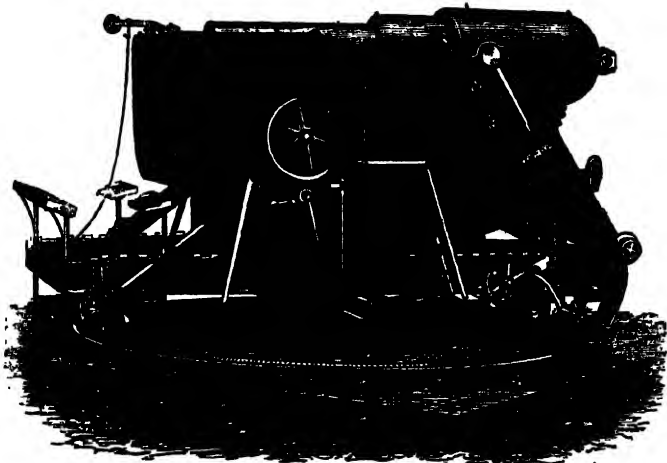
† The cost of a turret complete for two guns was estimated by Colonel Jervois, in his recent lecture at the Royal United Service Institution, at from 20,000*l.* to 25,000*l.*

of coast defence of that material which is pronounced on good authority, and which is recommended by common sense, as at once "the cheapest and the best which can be used in the construction of batteries."

At this point, however, we find ourselves face to face with an exceedingly ingenious and important invention, for mounting guns in such a way as to preserve the advantages of the barbette battery and to eliminate its defects. Captain Moncrieff, of the Edinburgh Militia Artillery, has succeeded in devising a plan by which the gun shall, like the rifleman, rise up above the parapet to fire, and retire behind it to load. A rifleman is, in fact, in this sense always and never *en barbette*. He unconsciously possesses all the advantages of a barbette battery without its defects—for the main defect of the system, exposure, is exhibited in his case, if he understand his craft, only for so short a time as to be practically inappreciable. The method of the rifleman possesses another great advantage. His appearance is unexpected. His enemy never knows where to look for him until he appears—and disappears, like the contending parties in an "Alabama duel." And what the rifleman does naturally and instinctively, that Captain Moncrieff has succeeded in doing for his gun. He has done this in a very ingenious, scientific manner. He develops no new force, but simply utilizes a very old one. Where the rifleman brings his muscles into play, Captain Moncrieff uses the force of recoil. This force has hitherto been an inconvenient and disagreeable one to deal with. It has been regarded as a force to be absorbed or controlled somehow, and it is often absorbed or controlled with considerable difficulty. Instead of simply absorbing it to no useful purpose, Captain Moncrieff applies it usefully. He turns a brute force into a docile and valuable ally. He coaxes it into doing three things: First, it must lower the gun behind the parapet after firing; secondly, it must raise the gun after loading to the firing position; thirdly, it must perform these services quietly, good-temperedly, with no convulsive, violent action, but with due subordination to control. That, on the face of it, is a good deal to get out of the artilleryman's old enemy, recoil. But that it is to be done has been demonstrated lately by two very successful experiments at Woolwich, with a 6½-ton 7-inch rifled gun, firing charges from 14 to 22 lbs.; in every instance without any noteworthy hitch or failure. A very few words added to the accompanying representations of this most ingenious contrivance will sufficiently describe it. The gun is mounted on a small iron carriage, which rests upon a pair of curved iron "elevators," or rockers, as we may call them more familiarly. Upon these rockers the gun is raised above the parapet or lowered behind it (*see* drawing). A counterweight placed between the forepart of the rockers rather more than balances the gun, which is continually in a condition of nearly stable equilibrium, whether elevated or depressed. After firing, the action of recoil serves to break the balance, by overcoming the counterweight, and down goes the gun, and up goes the counterweight. After loading, the counterweight (on the release of a pawl) raises the gun again into its firing position. The recoil of the



MONCRIEFF'S BARBETTE CARRIAGE—FIRING POSITION.



MONCRIEFF'S BARBETTE CARRIAGE—LOADING POSITION.

gun and carriage is regulated by the curve of the elevators. After loading, the elevation of the gun is regulated either by a friction-band, or, as now proposed, by a system of simple tackle. Between the movements the condition of equilibrium is maintained by the pawle. In this way, if so general and untechnical a description may pass, Captain Moncrieff works out his problem; and in so working it out he obtains incidentally and subordinately other advantages of no mean importance. Labour is economized. The horizontal and destructive strain due to recoil is also disposed of. This last advantage permits of the gun and carriage being mounted on rails and run along, if desired, behind the parapet, to make its appearance at uncertain points; or the gun may be placed in a gun-pit, the parapet in this instance being the natural feature of the ground; or a battery may be formed behind any available undulation, and without the expensive foundations required where a severe horizontal strain, due to recoil, has to be considered.

From any one of these points of view the system has the great merit of presenting the gun unexpectedly, for a short space of time only, and of exposing the smallest possible object and but a single man* to hostile fire. Either the parapet may be no parapet at all, or by the railway arrangement the gun may be made to travel along a regular parapet of earth, half sunken, if desired, or of natural formation where available. And in any case the enemy will have no notice or possible indication of the point of its probable appearance. For a smooth-seeming, friendly piece of ground, thus to become a very hornet's nest of formidable guns, popping up or over, here and there, must prove a serious embarrassment to any foe. Again, the system presents the advantages of great economy. Its economy is not, of course, to be measured with reference to the cost of an ordinary gun-carriage, although, even on such a comparison, the Moncrieff battery would, we believe, be found no more expensive than a muzzle-pivoting carriage. But its cost is to be set against the cost of another carriage plus that of an iron shield, or of an iron cupola. It is not a gun-carriage merely, but a system of battery in itself. Altogether the invention promises to possess important applications in connection with coast defence. It will undergo most exhaustive trials at Shoeburyness; but the principle, and in great part the mechanical details, we regard as established. Its importance has been so far recognized that already the erection of certain iron forts has been suspended, in view of the possible application in these positions of the Moncrieff battery. But the Moncrieff battery can be applied only in those positions where earth-works become practicable or desirable; and this, as we have explained, is not everywhere. So that this invention, valuable as it is likely to prove, can at the best furnish only one more element in the system of coast defence, and, no more than the iron fort element, includes a complete solution of it.

* By the use of an ingenious reflecting sight, Captain Moncrieff gets rid of the exposure of even a single man.

The last subject which we have reserved for consideration is one of very great and daily growing importance—the subject of marine obstructions. These form a belt or circle of defences, external to those which we have been discussing, and certainly no less necessary. Obstructions may serve one of two purposes. They may, as their name implies, be obstructions only, means of hampering, retarding, or even, under exceptionally favourable conditions, of altogether preventing the passage of a hostile ship or fleet—impediments more or less effective; or they may be in themselves destructive agents, capable of inflicting damage, more or less serious, upon the vessels which come within the sphere of their action. The first sort are generally included under the term *Passive*—the latter under the term *Active Obstructions*.

Passive Obstructions admit of further subdivision—into *Fixed* and *Floating Obstructions*. Of the first class are sunk ships (as used at Sebastopol, and the most costly sort of all), piles, stakes, rocks, marine chevaux-de-frise, dams, and generally whatever impediments would serve to diminish or close a sea-way or a river passage. Obviously, fixed obstructions are generally inapplicable in very deep channels where the vessels could sail over them, and they are generally costly and more or less tedious to produce. A more salient objection, however, presents itself in the fact that whatever impediments they oppose to the passage by an enemy's fleet, will form so many impediments to the navigation of the waters by friendly vessels—impediments, too, which may not easily be removed when the occasion for their employment has passed away.

Floating obstructions are of various sorts, such as stout nets, ropes, cables, rafts, ships chained together, booms, and whatever will oppose an inert mass to the passage of a vessel, and which a vessel cannot easily over-ride or break through. Of obstructions of this class a well-constructed, flexible boom of spars and ropes is perhaps the best. A boom of this sort may be made not only flexible enough to resist the first pressure of an opposing vessel, but will oppose a gradually increasing resistance, due to the mass of water behind it. The boom would be attached to moorings—floating, or, at least, yielding moorings being the best—and its ends, if possible, should be under the control of the defenders on shore. Of course a second boom behind the first makes the protection still more complete. And for the protection of the boom itself, with a view to enabling it to fulfil its functions, which really are less those of completely and finally closing a channel without reference to other means of defence, than of keeping a vessel under fire of the defending batteries, the boom should be placed within the effective range of the defending guns.

That impediments of these descriptions, judiciously constructed and disposed, would often prove exceedingly valuable—nay, that they are of almost indispensable importance—cannot be doubted. Colonel von Schellha, to whose interesting work we are largely indebted, lays down on this point two axioms:—First: “No forts now built can keep out a large fleet

unless the channel is obstructed.”* Second: “No fleet can force a passage if kept under fire by obstructions.” And again, “In no single instance during the North American war did a naval attack succeed when the channel had been obstructed, and in no single instance did it fail when the channel had remained open.”†

The other class of obstructions, which we have designated Active Obstructions, is more familiarly known under the name of Torpedoes. A torpedo is merely a submarine mine, so called, we believe, from the electrical fish which delivers its shocks under water. Torpedoes are a more important element in coast defence than simple passive obstructions. They do that to the unarmed bottom of a ship which artillerists strive by means of shell to do through the armour-clad sides. They may, indeed, be regarded as huge and terribly destructive shells, directed against a vessel's most vulnerable part. We say “directed against” advisedly, for torpedoes may be actively as well as passively employed. The most common impression of a torpedo is a submerged mine, which explodes when a vessel passes over or comes into contact with it—a defensive agent merely. But a torpedo may also be made an attacking agent. It may be fixed to a small vessel, at a short distance from it, and thus driven against the hostile ship; or it may be allowed to drift, or be towed across the vessel's path; or it may be projected by machinery, or even, possibly, from some piece of ordnance. These applications, although (with the exception, perhaps of the last) proved to be practicable, are more hazardous than the ordinary one of mooring the torpedo in a fixed position in the channel of approach, and allowing it to be discharged in the contact of the vessel by some mechanical agency, or on the vessel's near approach, by some electrical agency. Mechanical torpedoes appear to have been used, on rare occasions, for more than two centuries. They were employed also by the Russians, though with little effect, for the defence of Cronstadt, and there are many instances of their use during the American war. It is evident that the mechanical agencies available for this purpose are almost infinite. They may be percussive, frictional or concussive, or on a clock-work system. Detonating compositions, acids, or regularly burning match may be used in various dispositions. But these torpedoes are all open to much the same objections as apply to fixed obstructions—that once in position they close the navigation alike to friend and foe, and that there is some danger attending their use and manipulation. But in certain positions they would be useful, as on foreign stations or at isolated points, where torpedoes might have to be extemporised on an emergency, or as drifting torpedoes; and they are unlikely, therefore, ever to pass entirely out of use.

But the electrical torpedo is, without doubt, the highest development

* This statement is a quotation from a report of Admiral Porter's, and refers to forts less powerful than those which we propose to employ. It admits, therefore, of some qualification.

† *Coast Defence*, pp. 47, 124, 178.

of marine obstructive defence. It presents at once an engine of war awfully destructive to an enemy, absolutely harmless to its employers, and under ready control. The Russians were the first, from all accounts, to use electrical torpedoes (in 1855); but the advance of scientific knowledge suggests many and great improvements on the system then employed. Indeed, the difficulty is now rather to select from among the many plans which present themselves for applying electricity in one form or another, than in finding a suitable application. And when the precise agent, whether frictional, voltaic or magnetic electricity, and the precise means of applying it have been determined, there remains the choice between contact-exploding torpedoes and torpedoes to be fired by operators on shore.

An important consideration in connection with torpedoes is the nature of explosive material to be used for charging them. Everything thus far seems to point to the employment of gun-cotton. Bulk for bulk, compressed gun-cotton is at least four times as powerful as gunpowder. The more rapid combustion of gun-cotton presents an advantage also, as rendering unnecessary so great a strength of case to resist the initial pressure; and both the dimensions and weight of a gun-cotton torpedo to produce equal effects with one charged with gunpowder may thus be greatly reduced. It is possible that further researches may result in the production of an even more powerful agent than gun-cotton, and one which may be as safely and easily employed.

These considerations are very far from exhausting the subject, which branches off into innumerable details connected with the precise size and strength of the torpedo case; the depth to which it should be submerged; the manner in which it should be moored; the proximity of one torpedo to the other; the order of their arrangement; and the particular positions in which they may be most effectively employed. But they will serve at least to show how large a subject is opened out for investigation. The American war furnishes many interesting examples of the terrible effects of torpedoes, among which the destruction of the *Tecumseh* is one of the most striking. The moral effect of these agents cannot be so easily estimated; but it is doubtless very great indeed.

Our observations would be fatally incomplete were we to stop here. Fortunately we are able to add, that the whole subject of floating obstructions and submarine mines has in this country occupied the attention of a special committee for nearly five years. This committee was appointed by Lord de Grey in 1863, at the instigation, we believe, of Colonel Jervois, to whom every credit is due on this account. Their report has not been made public, but it is understood that they have been engaged in the systematic investigation of the whole subject, and have elaborated a scheme of marine obstructive defence down to its minutest details. The engineers at Chatham, and the navy at Plymouth and Portsmouth, are now regularly instructed in the theory and practical application of the subject, so that we need be under no anxiety as to our position with regard to this important

element of coast defence. But because obstructions and torpedoes are so important we must not run away with the idea that they are to supersede forts, or ships, or artillery power. This can never be. As auxiliary agents they are material, we may say indispensable, features in a complete system of coast defences. In certain positions also they may stand by themselves,—as in shallow beaches, in narrow channels, in rivers, and at points where forts and other means of defence do not exist. But permanent works of defence will still be necessary in important positions. The effect of a torpedo is at best, or at worst, exceedingly local and limited, and no torpedo can act more than once. They are, we repeat, and must ever remain auxiliary agents merely; but auxiliary agents of so necessary a character that England, least of all countries, can afford to dispense with them, or to overlook their most perfect and wholesale application.

And now, having discussed the subject at a length which we fear may prove tedious, we are only too conscious how incomplete are our remarks. We have merely, after all, cast a stone into the water and noted some of the circles which it creates. And not only have we merely skimmed the surface of the subject and avoided its depths, but we have noted only a few of the circles which enclose the immediate centre of the discussion. We have dealt with coast defence only in its local aspect, and coast defence may exist without any local application at all. It may be effected by means either of a coasting or harbour fleet of iron-clad floating batteries, or by a blockading fleet, which will parry or paralyse the blow by keeping the hostile sword sheathed in its scabbard. In this last way did we paralyse the Black Sea fleet at Sebastopol. A complete system, however, of coast defence comprises all these things,—the sea fleet, the coast fleet, the harbour and coast obstructions, the iron forts, the guns to defend them and men to work the guns. And when we speak of a system of coast defence, such as befits a first-rate sea-girt power like England, we include not one ring of defence, but many—a series of concentric circles of protection, within which and behind all our walls and guns and armour rests the great heart of the people, whose motto is, "Defence, not Defiance."

■

■



"I SHALL GO TO HIM."

Blount.

CHAPTER XIII.

SEARCH.



It was a long journey, posting in winter along bad roads, and sleeping at inns cold and unfrequented at that time of the year. Mrs. Ayscough had given no reason for their journey to the Blounts, but had only proposed a visit on their way south.

"We had better not take the boy home at once; we cannot tell what he may be like even if he is alive," said the more prudent wife in answer to her husband's innumerable plans for the disposal of "the urchin," as he constantly called him; always treating him in his thoughts as a sort of chattel, a possession belonging to himself to be done to according to his will. Millicent sighed as she heard

him: there had been sad passages in her past life between Rupert, the self-willed heir, and his equally obstinate father.

Mr. Ayscough had worked himself up to a state of talkative hope, such as distressed her exceedingly. How should she take this unknown lad into her heart to supplant the loved ones of the past? The squire thought only of taking him into the estate, which was far easier.

They had reached their last stage: the country roads lay through large fields, and even on this, pre-eminently called the London road, from the county town, it was not laned in or fenced off; apparently as each piece had been redeemed from the waste, the fence was run across the public way with a gate, which gave one an idea of the utter valuelessness of time in the days when such arrangement was possible. They drove on through one lonely field after another—cold, blank, flat, and uninteresting on that cheerless winter's day. "Another gate!" said Mr. Ayscough, impatiently. "I declare it's the fourteenth I've counted since we changed horses!"

But this time there was scarcely any pause ; a tall lad, with a long pole shod with iron over his shoulder, opened it almost before the horses had pulled up.

"I should like to have stopped and spoken to that young fellow," said Mrs. Ayscough, nervously, and looking anxiously out of the window, as they drove on again. "The village may be anywhere in this neighbourhood, and he might have known something."

"I never heard anything so absurd," cried her husband irritably, with a man's horror at delay, and at "stopping the carriage," even for the very object on which they were bent. "I do believe you'd speak to every man, woman, and child we met in the road. I should like to know when you expect to get to Hartley at that rate, making inquiries and setting everybody on the look-out? I shouldn't wonder if you took that tall big man for the child," he added, with an uneasy laugh.

"He wasn't a big man, dear," she answered gently. "You hardly saw him on your side the carriage. And, Rupert," she added, in a low voice, "you remember the boy must be nineteen if he's alive at all."

They were both silent, and the carriage rolled on ; the fields were perfectly solitary, neither man nor beast was to be seen as the grey evening fell, raw, cold, and wretched.

"I half wish we'd stopped and spoken to that young fellow after all," muttered Mr. Ayscough, when they had gone on a couple of miles and it was too late ; but the idea had taken possession of his mind, slow to receive, tenacious to retain, as so often happens, and he stopped the carriage.

"Do you know whether there's a place called Avonhoe anywhere near here?" said he to the postboy.

"Avonhoe?" repeated the man doubtfully. "Oh, ay, it's only a few cottages, not a place at all. It was to the left as we came along, maybe a matter of two miles back, up away from the road a mile or more from the last gate."

Mrs. Ayscough avoided looking at her husband, and the carriage drove on.

It was dark as the old yellow chariot turned in at the Hartley lodges. Mrs. Ayscough's heart died within her as she sadly and silently drew near the end of her journey. Her thoughts went back to the old, old times, so vividly that the years between seemed lost to her : to the time when she had been a young beauty and a sort of heiress, and Sir John Blount "desperately" (as it was called then) in love with her. And then his riding forty miles to meet her at a ball, and his look when he heard his fate, came back to her. He was a little insignificant-looking man, sensible and good, but not brilliant ; and Millicent went over the reasons in her own mind against him as if it had been yesterday, and the why and the wherefore she had preferred the handsome young Rupert Ayscough, with half the fortune and position, and suspected of "a temper." But it was not this which made her sigh—she loved her husband, temper or no temper ; but

when she compared the triumphant confidence and sunny belief in life and what it must infallibly bring with it, of the beauty of nineteen, it was almost with a sigh of pity that she murmured to herself of herself under her breath, "poor child!" as if it had been of some one else.

She had never been to the Grange since: with her beautiful children, full of hope and happiness, she had spent a few days there on their way north; and her heart sank as the hall doors flew open, the whole chorus of dogs saluting them within and without the house, from "Mr. Charles'" Skye terrier to the great mastiff in the stable-yard. Stunned by the noise and dazzled by the light, she almost stumbled through the old hall, where Lady Blount's loud reception of them, with the wonderful talent she possessed for rubbing all textures the wrong way, made her guest's entrance a painful ordeal.

"How long it is since you have been here!" she began, meaning to be kind; "not since you brought the children. I remember so well how naughty Rupert was that time; he broke a jug before he'd been an hour in the house." Mrs. Ayscough winced at the unnecessary reminiscence of poor Rupert's early crimes against the crockery, and turned away a little. "You're wonderfully altered to be sure," her hostess went on. "I don't think I should have known you if I'd met you in the road, and I daresay you'd say the same of me. Here's Charles, you see, stout and hearty, as all my children are, thank God."

"I suppose there is a good deal more snow up north than we've had here. You must have had but a cold journey, I'm afraid. You look a good deal knocked up," said Sir John, kindly, after a few minutes, and Millicent was only too thankful to accept the excuse and escape upstairs as soon as she could. Lady Blount, never tired, never sorry, was a little annoyed; perhaps her temper was not improved by Sir John's exclamation as they came down from escorting their guests. "What a very interesting-looking woman Millicent Ayscough is still," said he, as he took up his candle to dress.

Lady Blount knew of that little passage in her husband's past, and still resented any admiration of her predecessor in his love as a crime of *lèse conjugalité*. Millicent's tall slender figure in its deep mourning, her slow graceful movements, sweet voice, and gentle manner, were as great a contrast as could be found to Lady Blount's fussy ways, stout proportions, and comfortable big face; and naturally she preferred herself.

"Upon my word it's shocking to see her give way so. I really must speak my mind to her about it," said the lady rather acrimoniously.

"I have not the least doubt you will, my dear," said her lord, but only to himself; there was a terribly significant nod which he knew too well, and he did not utter his thought, for he was a quiet man.

The right to lecture Lady Blount considered the most valuable part of the rights of relationship (though she by no means confined it within those limits). And yet she was a good woman, and anxious to be kind and to

do good after her own fashion ; but then human nature is perverse, and likes to have the good done to it after the manner it itself thinks good.

Dinner was some protection even from Lady Blount.

"I'm so glad you've got away from that solitary house of yours, Millicent. It's a very fine country, I daresay, but it's so cold and so far away, I always wondered how you could live there, and it must be ten times worse now."

Sir John struck in to the rescue. "I hope you'd no trouble about horses on your road? I wrote about them for your last two stages. There's no knowing how long we shall have horses at all, if these railroads succeed."

"We saw the —ford coach come in and change horses before we left the main road," answered Mr. Ayscough across the table, "and I don't believe they were two minutes about it. It's a gallant sight! How it did remind me of the glories of old college days, when we used to drive that stage. They go faster than in our day though. I never should have been allowed to bring the team in at that pace round the sharp corner by the bridge; I'm sure they were more than three parts over. If it hadn't been for a fat woman on the off-side who kept them straight, there'd have been an overturn as sure as fate."

"You know the coachman's account of the passengers' chances in oversetting. 'Some on 'um lumps 'um, but for my part mostly I spreads 'um,'" said Charles.

"We pay for our pace," said Sir John, dolefully. "I was at the 'Bull and Mouth,' last October, to inquire for compensation to a poor maid of ours in a coach accident. 'What accident, sir?' said they. 'Why, it was on Thursday night.' 'There were five accidents on Thursday night, sir.'"

"George caught his death by going outside the coach from London to York, didn't he, Millicent? Those young men are so foolish," put in Lady Blount, with her usual talent for dragging in unpleasant topics.

"Well, at all events they're safer than these new-fangled railroads. I wouldn't go on one of them for the King's crown. Did ye see that excellent article in the *Quarterly* showing what folly they are? They won't go safely above five miles an hour, and the canals will beat 'em. That Stephenson must be a perfect ass," said old Ayscough.

"But," said Charles hesitatingly, before the "wisdom of his ancestors," "he has made the train go already seventeen miles an hour quite safely; it was in the paper yesterday, and they can't be much more dangerous than the coaches."

"Then they'll ruin the breed of horses,—that's what they'll do if they succeed," cried Mr. Ayscough angrily, "and no more oats will be grown. We heard there was a rascally fellow at Longston last week, night after night, laying down his chains and his sights, and I don't know what all; but Lord Bewley set all his keepers and men after them, and they kicked

over the wretched things and broke the marks over and over again. He went out with them himself once and knocked a fellow down who came up to him in the dark, mistaking him for one of his mates. He's saved this county at least. I tell you it's just a branch of the Birmingham Political Union," repeated Ayscough, excitedly.

"Well, I'm not so sure of that," replied Sir John, quietly. "If you lived on a clay soil like this, with ruts up to the axle, you'd think we might go a bit faster without ruining the British Constitution. How does the new Poor Law work up in your parts?" said he, to change the conversation. But the "new Poor Law" was Lady Blount's "black beast," and the signal for her departure.

It was not till the ladies had retired, that Mr. Ayscough began upon his story and his inquiries; while in the drawing-room Millicent was explaining, in the fewest possible words, to Lady Blount, what was their errand. It was said, however, in such a manner that it prevented the discussion and the good advice which she sensitively knew were in store for her, by the same instinct which a pigeon has of the approach of a hawk, and which she was warding off by every device in her power. Having launched Lady Blount at last in a full description of all her descendants, Millicent leant back with a sigh of relief and let her thoughts wander to her own sorrows. Her hostess had reached in regular progression the account of her fifteenth grandchild—"as fine a baby as ever you saw, and such a pair of legs"—when she was roused by a deep sigh from her patient listener, and it suddenly struck even her obtuseness that the description of unknown and irrelevant babies was not exactly the topic most likely to cheer the childless mother. But the perception only made her angry with her interlocutor, not with her own immaculate self. With such characters the "I" cannot be wrong. "*Je ne vois que moi qui aye toujours raison*," as the Duchesse de Maine once seriously declared, and it is their honest belief. Even when they see that there has been a mistake, as it cannot, even by the clearest evidence, be the infallible "I" who has erred, they visit it heavily on the other side.

Accordingly the long averted hailstorm came down at last: "Really, Millicent, I must say that the manner in which you give way, the want of exertion on your part —"

Poor Mrs. Ayscough looked pitifully round for help from gods or men; the persons with feeling have no chance in such encounters, their very delicacy prevents their making the retort or the allusion which would silence their adversary. Luckily, rescue arrived from the dining-room. Sir John was not a demonstrative man, but he was a very feeling one: his pity had stirred towards his old love, and he knew the sledge-hammer of his wife's tongue; so that after poor Ayscough's pride of race and aching longing for a descendant on whom to rest his plans, had been tumbled out rather incoherently, and Charles had told the little that he knew about the boy at Avonhoe, the kindly old squire rose a long half hour before his usual time.

"If you've had wine enough now, Ayscough, shall we go and interrupt the ladies?"

Lady Blount was a good deal vexed at being thus again balked of her lecture; no wonder that so much bottled wisdom unused made her a little sour, and she grew more rude, or as she called it "true," than ever.

"What's that big thing you've got round your neck, Millicent?" said she presently to Mrs. Ayscough, who was playing rather nervously with a locket. "Oh, it's your children's hair, is it? let me look. What splendid sapphires! I didn't know you could afford such magnificences—let me look at them."

Mrs. Ayscough undid the velvet, and Charles, a good deal annoyed at his mother's rudeness, carried it to her.

"They were only out of an old thing which I found in a drawer with the enamel rubbed off; the jeweller at York took out the stones and set them again for me; he said they were very fine."

"And so that's your children's hair?" Lady Blount went on, looking critically at it through her eyeglass. "I'm sure I thought George's had been redder—quite carrotty I used to think it."

"They said the locket had been given by the Queen of Bohemia to the Ayscough who served in Prince Rupert's cavalry," broke in Millicent, anxiously grasping at the nearest topic which would keep off the enemy, and quite unconscious of her æsthetic crime.

"A jewel from the Queen of Bohemia!" cried Charles, who belonged to a generation which felt all the enormity. "We've a man near here (Claude Morris, you know, father), who would have given one of the eyes out of his head to see it—that is, before it was broken up. He pulled down half the books in the library about a picture here with a locket in its hand that hangs on the great stairs; he had discovered her tomb, he said, in the old church at Avonhoe, with the jewel in her hand, and wanted to make her out. By-the-by, the lady was an Ayscough who had married into the Tracy family. By Jove, it would be curious if it were the same!" And turning to Mr. Ayscough, who had come up behind his wife's chair, he added,—“Claude Morris is the young clergyman at Avonhoe, whom we told you at dinner would be sure to know most about the boy; the Pangbournes live in his parish; indeed, he has told me about him more than once, without, of course, knowing who he was.”

"Your mother says that you once saw him, Charles," observed Mrs. Ayscough, in the lowest possible tone.

"A fine tall dark-eyed young fellow he was, I remember, hanging over poor Rupert's body—that day he was flung by Black Bess—his father," he muttered to himself. "I was so struck with the likeness."

"Will you ride or drive there to-morrow, Ayscough? it's a long way round for wheels, and at least two miles from any hard road; but if the ground serves, Charles can take you across the chace in little more than eight," said good-natured Sir John, who thought his guest would be more at his ease on his painful errand with only the younger man.

"I'll chance the fields. You and I are not so young as we were, Blount, but I think I can hold my own yet across country with Master Charles, if he isn't very outrageous; and I'm much obliged to you. It's a generous thing to mount a man in the hunting season."

CHAPTER XIV.

OUT INTO THE WORLD.

For the last few months Rupert had been growing very restless and uneasy: he worked away at his books, but they no longer seemed to interest him; reading never could be for him as with Claude, carried on for reading's sake; knowledge was only a means for the active work of life for which he longed daily more and more. His imagination had taken fire with all the stirring pictures which Claude set before him,—the battles, the sieges, the sudden glories, the grand deaths: life was not worth having to him if he was to plod on in this aimless narrow circle; he would be a soldier.

Unconsciously, Claude had been feeding this fierce longing after action by every word which he uttered, by every fresh history, past and present. To go far away into the world, and do battle with life, had become a craving in him, to carve out his own fortunes.

He grew more and more moody. Mary was puzzled by his short, sharp answers, and meekly tried to follow his thoughts and sympathize with them although she could not understand. She had dropped gradually from his life; the difference of age, of tastes, and now of education, were all telling against her, and dividing them more and more. She felt it very keenly, poor child, but there was no help for it. The love of power was strong in Rupert, the imperious nature only kept in check by his reverence for Mr. Morris, and which showed itself to every one else even when he cared for them. The consideration for natures different from his own, the perception of the feelings of others, would never be strong in his impetuous, absorbed character, and he often wounded her sadly. He went on right ahead after his object, without looking right or left, or backwards; with such natures the future is all in all; and Mary's heart grew sore and sad when she saw how completely the past was dead to him. She had that curious passion of self-sacrifice and affection which one often sees in a little girl, utterly thrown away, misunderstood, and neglected by the great boy on whom it is lavished with such ungrudging profusion.

"He'll come back, Mary," said Claude, one day when he saw her small wistful face. "Sometimes our friends go a long way off from us, and we must have patience and trust, and sometimes they come all right again; but real love's never wasted, anyhow. 'Love them for what they are, nor love them less, because to thee they are not what they were.'"

But he spoke to Rupert.

"I can't attend to all those little things she wants me to," said he, with the impatient toss of his head. "I've so much to think of now."

"They're not little things, if they hurt other people," answered Claude, as he somewhat shook his head. "You'll give a great deal of pain in your life, Rupert, if you don't take care: you squeeze an orange and throw it away. Mary did a great deal for you when nobody else did or could or would: you've no right to accept affection when it's of use to you, and fling it away when you think you've got something better; affection has its duties as well as its rights, remember."

It had been a very provoking winter to a large section of the human race, viz. boys, in the one point for which, to their minds, winter exists at all, sliding and skating. It had been very cold and disagreeable; but the wind had prevented the proper amount of ice, or there had been a thaw or a snow just at the wrong time; and all the boys in the Midland and Southern counties had considered this as a personal insult inflicted on them by the weather, and had evidently thought it a mean advantage, and that the weather ought to be ashamed of itself.

There was a very large pond belonging to the ancient "pleasance" of the Tracys, much frequented by all the infantry near, and, therefore, this weather had been particularly aggravating, and groups of little blue noses and red chins had been seen at all odd times looking dully at the cross-grained water which would not freeze, or froze to no good purpose.

Even Claude Morris was by no means insensible to the misfortune, and had been down most days to try the ice; but there were very deep holes known to exist in the pool, and the weeds were long and thick, and it was not a safe place to trifle with.

He had been trying all the autumn with Rupert's help to build a flat-bottomed sort of punt, the utmost limit of their joint skill. There was a great solid old structure, called the "church barn," in which they worked together, almost as large and old as the church itself; and Claude had had a rude sort of carpenter's shop constructed there for some repairs which were going on in the church roof. Everything which involves hammering and contriving is a supreme delight to man and boy, and in an unheroic fashion, as long as it lasted, the work had kept the lad, as Claude intended, from more exciting objects; but the "ship," as Avonhoe persisted in calling it, was nearly finished, and the carpenter from Sainton was up to complete something which they could not manage for themselves.

"We'll go down to the pool and fix a staple and chain where the boat can be fastened," said Claude as they all finished work. "See," added he to the lad, pointing to the carpenter, a great friend and ally of his, who was going quietly home down the hill before them, "that man's strength is like an elephant's, and his touch is as delicate and true as it is strong. He does his work in life with his hands and his head as well as it can be done; he is a skilled artist and an honourable Christian man. You won't do better than that if you go half the wide world over."

"Ah, but he's so patient and so strong; and I ain't neither, you

know," answered poor Rupert, with a sort of dim sense of the amount of strength and patience required sometimes to live a very quiet life.

They reached the pool, and fastened their chain to a split ash-tree, through which many a sick child had been thrust for cure. The evening was bright and clear, and the noise of their hammering sounded sharp and almost musical in the frosty air over the wide stretch of dull white ice which spread out broad and level at their feet.

"If this weather will only hold till morning, it'll be safe to bear," said Rupert, stepping anxiously down on the polished surface, which shook ominously, however, in all directions.

"It's dangerous enough now, and not worth while risking," answered Claude; very sagely as to his words, and not at all in his practice, as he went on trying its strength until he nearly reached the middle of the pool.

"Don't ye go that way, Mr. Morris," cried Rupert anxiously after him; "that's just where the Hell Hole is: they don't know where it doesn't reach to, it's so deep." And as Mr. Morris turned back towards the shore, he went on—"It's where they say Cromwell's trooper was drowned out bathing, and there's a fish, no end of big, lives there in among the black mud and weeds. And *this* tale's true, for Jared saw him with his own eyes in broad daylight!"

Claude laughed as he came back again among the flags and reeds. "Oh, that's where the hole is; I never knew exactly before; now we've got the boat, we'll have a try at the great pike when the summer comes back again."

It was a beautiful evening, and very still, and he lingered on as the shadows fell; though it was cold, the mere word of the thermometer signifies little where there is no wind. Not a dead leaf stirred as they turned up the hill once more and stood on a high projecting sort of bastion still left of one of the ruined terraces of the old house, watching the long level lines of red light against the horizon. The pine-trees on that side the hill had been mostly cut down, but at the head of the great pool a grove of tall elms and abeles still remained, where lived a large and noisy colony of rooks: the great flights of black dots were now streaming home in long wavy lines and clouds which seemed never to come to an end, and circling round and round their home with a great flapping of wings, as they settled down noisily for the night; while the loud "parliament-talk," the gossip concerning the day's work, in which they seem to indulge before going to bed, rose high. The delicate tracing of the boughs of the great trees came out against the clear upper sky, and the black stems stood forth across the crimson and orange light below.

"It would be misery to me to think of staying here all my life," groaned Rupert impatiently, going back as always to his fixed idea, quite unmindful of sunsets or rooks. "I must go out and see what the world is like, and make myself a place in it. What should I do when you were gone, you know? It cannot be wrong to go afield and seek one's fortune. I want to do something," he said, vehemently.

" 'Thou camest not to thy place by accident ; it was the very place God meant for thee,' " muttered Claude, almost to himself.

" Yes ; but in that case would any man ever do anything ? " replied the lad, excitedly. " Is there no choice left in life ? How are heroes ever grown ? All the men ye talk about so went out into the world and fought hard for their lives. "

" The world isn't such a fine place as you fancy, Rupert, and the struggle to live must be done in dusty places, with mean men too often. "

" We're not much like angels here, some of us, " answered the young man, bitterly.

" No, " said Claude, with a half laugh, looking up at the tall dark fellow beside him ; who understood him, and flushed up to the eyes. " Besides, surely even Hawkshill is a different place from what it was for you, my lad, " he went on.

Rupert knew that this was true, and he knew, too, by whose unobtrusive means the change had come. He was a moody fellow in general, full of sudden bursts of excited thought and feeling ; but he looked up for a moment with the bright smile that sometimes lighted his face. Presently, however, he went on as if there had been no interruption : " I shouldn't mind dying like Sir Alexander, ' having slain three enemies with my own hand at point of pike, ' " said he, fiercely. " I wish I'd lived in those times when there was a lot more fighting to be done. "

" Who are your enemies, Rupert ? " answered Claude, rather sadly. " They're inside, not out, for most of us. Couldn't you manage to stay and beat some of them here ? "

" But all the men who have been worth anything have gone away and helped themselves ; Columbus wouldn't have found America with stopping at home, nor all those fellows have won India, you know. I don't mean, " said the lad, a little despondingly, " as I could do much when I do go ; but it can't be *wrong*. "

Claude was sorely perplexed. His own tranquil nature had no sympathy with these ardent longings for action ; it seemed to him like flinging himself into the whirlpool from off the safe shore, yet he could not say that it was wrong : he was silent.

" After one's been hard at it, perhaps it's pleasant to be still ; but I'm not tired yet ; I don't like being quiet, " said Rupert, passionately.

As he spoke Claude looked up. A triangle of wild-fowl, with their rapid determined flight and a wild weird scream, were passing in a wedge-shape over their heads right on—far up in the higher fields of air where he could not reach—moving by an impulse he could not measure, but apparently more certain of their way than the line of cows below returning sleepily home through the fields.

" ' Each after his kind, and God saw that it was good. ' I won't try and keep a wild bird longer in the farmyard, " thought he to himself, with a sigh. " I will write to-morrow, " said he aloud ; " perhaps Charles Blount would help us. We'll try for the Engineers, at all events. But

you'll hardly get much of ambition, or excitement either, out of the army as a private soldier, I'm afraid."

Rupert looked at him with almost passionate affection. "If you were going to stay even, it would be different," he said, in the lowest possible tone; "but what could I do here alone?"

The small living which Claude was expecting might, it was true, drop in at any moment, and he knew that the loneliness would then be unbearable for the boy.

"Well, God go with you, my lad. As well as a flying bird, as a beast of burden, you may follow where He leads; he that saveth his life shall lose it," he said, with a smile. "But mind for those who choose their own path and seek their own work it is the more necessary to do well the every-day duties that come in their way, the more scrupulously indeed, in that they have chosen in higher things."

Claude was not a man of shining ability, but he had that rarest of all gifts, the power of sympathizing with tastes and feelings which he did not share—and even, which is hardest of all, to believe that the right for another may lie in a different direction from what he himself would have chosen—to "believe all things, to hope all things;" but it requires very true humility to do this, and humility is the most uncommon quality to be found in the world. Very earnestly did he pray that night, "Show me thy way"—that he might see the right himself, and guide the lad in it.

CHAPTER XV.

THE "HELL HOLE" IN THE GREAT POOL.

THE next morning the whole world was white and brilliant with a hoar-frost, the weather had changed in the night, and every twig and bough, every dead leaf and evergreen, had alike been crystallized into a beautiful jewel, after having been thoroughly wetted by a blanket of fog. Nothing could be more lovely than the effect of the whole; even the little bits of dirty mud and dead deformed vegetation were transfigured by the exquisite touch of the frost with rare and fanciful devices, the world was covered with an intricate labour of delicate tracery, stars and points, and wonderful figures and crystals mixing into each other with apparent infinite variety, and all sparkling in the sunshine which was destroying them piecemeal as the heat increased.

"Ain't the world pretty to-day, mother?" said Mary.

"It's as if the fairies had been making fligree all night; how busy they must have been," observed Claude, who came in as she spoke.

"It's all one like the lace-work as Molly Toby makes" (*i.e.* wife of Tobias, the surname as usual omitted), observed Mrs. Blizard, looking at the branching white trees of frost on the window-panes. It rather took

away from the charm and the romance, and Mary was silent. As the day drew on, however, all the beauty melted and faded away, and the afternoon was as dark and miserable as if sunshine and brightness had never existed in the world.

"Mayn't I go and see 'um put the ship into the pond, mother? they said as how they'd finish it to-day," said Mary, anxiously, who had long been watching for that great event.

"Law, child, no. It's so slippery and sloppy and slushy along them roads, which roads there is none in these parts, and I never saw such places for mud, not in my born days," answered Mrs. Blizard energetically. "What have you got to do with ships as ye should go and dirt yourself like that, bless you, and me so plagued with the population of the heart, as there's like a little bird hopping inside of it, and so attached with the headache as ye knows I wants ye badly a'most every minute."

And poor Mary was obliged to imagine for herself what was going on at the pools.

Claude had been almost as busily interested as Rupert himself in their clumsy craft, and they looked at their handiwork that day at the dinner-hour (which was generally the lad's only time for such pastimes) with nearly equal pride, as they put in the final touches to it in the great old "church barn." The doors, which were generally wide open, had been closed on account of the cold, and the only light which came in was from an opening high up in the wall, between the great beams of the roof, which threw dark shadows in every direction upon all sorts of curious lumber: bits of carved wood torn down by ruthless churchwardens, an old octagon font broken across, finials, pieces of panelling, and all kinds of odds and ends of stone and iron work out of the old manor-house, which were piled about in very picturesque confusion.

There was a little red spot of fire in the middle, built up with a few bricks, over which Rupert stood overlooking the melting of some pitch, the thin blue smoke out of which looked very necromantic, when a little messenger opened the door and came timidly into the great dark space within.

"Oh, if you please, sir, Granny have a had a fit of the parallels, and will you come to her, as may be d'reckly?" said she, looking somewhat anxiously round her.

With a doctor five miles away, Claude was generally appealed to by his parishioners as their bodily as well as spiritual adviser. There was not an hour's work at the boat now left to do, and it was with rather a rueful countenance that he prepared to go with the child.

"What, you're Granny Bathe's little maid? Has she only got you to take care of her?" said he, smiling, as he put on his coat.

"I'm in my nine, and I've minded Granny ever sin' I were a little girl, and we moved after the great fire at Yardley End," answered she with some majesty. She was watching Rupert's big shadow rather fearfully, which went up and down over the white wall, as he moved between

it and the fire in a very uncanny manner: she did not quite like it, and looked at him intently, without the smallest intention of connecting him with their past misfortune, but he turned away uneasily; he did not like any mention of the fire.

"I thought Widow Bathe was living at Sainton," observed Claude.

"So she is; but she comes backwards and forrards, and she've a sent the littlest of our boys to help we wi' errands and sich like; but he's such a one for sliding, he is: he's allays so after the water when he can get at a bit o' ice is Bobby, and it frights Granny 'orrid. He ain't o' much account, boys never is," observed this aged person, with mild gravity.

"We shall have an accident now before the boat's done," muttered Claude. "It's a pity not to get it finished to-day; if you'll stay and do it, I'll speak to your grandfather; and there's the blacksmith has never sent home the punt-pole."

"I'll fetch it. I've got to go down to the smith's for my grandfather; there's something broke in the cart," replied Rupert. "And then I can just as lief hop back by the pond, athwart the mead; it's a'most as nigh as t'other way."

"Tell Jared that he's to get the boat carried down to the pool as soon as it's finished, and I'll meet you there," Claude called out, as he went hurriedly away with the child.

Not long after he left the barn, Jared sauntered in at the open door, with the old ratcatcher beside him, who looked more wizened and withered than ever.

"And what's ever Mr. Morris after now, I'd like to know?" said he, looking curiously about him. "I cotched such a chill as I were feared to come out in such lippy (wet) weather; but I heard a sound about the little ship,* and I thowt I'd just crawl up to my daughter's for to see what 'twere as ye were all about. It's wonderful queer to be sure!" he went on, inspecting the punt critically, with an important air. "What call on airth have he wi' ships? and to pay good money to the joiner, as he's a doing for sich-like concerns as have never been seen or heard on in these parts!"

"He's a bit off of his mind, I thinks, by whiles; for to worrit we wi' such like as has no sense nor signification whatsoever as iver I can see, and tis but a tunky † thing after all to look at," said Jared, sourly.

"You've no right to speak of him like that," cried Rupert, firing up in defence of his friend: "he's as good as gold every inch of him, that's what he is."

"There ain't a many on 'um anyhow then, not the inches," replied Jared, dogmatically; "and much yer knows about it. Eh, what a lot on

* "Litel schip," used for boat.—CHAUCER. "And filled both ships, so that they began to sink."—LUKE 7.

† Thick—squat.

'um I've a seen, that's the curates, one after t'other like the flies in summer."

"This un's a good un, I hear tell, and preaches rarely sometimes, so as you'd hear a cricket chirp i' the church," said old Simon.

"They're one pretty much same as another, as fur as ever I've a found; so I just puts up my feet in the pew most times (it's convenient, ye know, i' the corner) and thinks o' nothing at all," replied Jared consequentially, his connection with the church giving him a right to speak on such matters with authority; but "the rook is not considered a religious bird, because he often dwells so nigh the steeple," so why should it be expected of Jared?

"And then he's so queer; he don't believe nought like other folk does, and as everybody knows. I telled him as verdigris off o' the church bells wus the sovereign'st thing on earth for the shingles, and he said, quite angry, as it were enow to venom the folk, and I woren't to give it to nobody by no means; as if he know'd ever so much better nor me!" "He's so young," said Jared, with much disgust.

"And you as is so many times his age of life," said Simon, sympathetically, sitting down on half a stone griffin which had once ornamented the old gateway, and stirring up the peat embers with the end of his stick as he tried to warm his old bones.

"And there one day, as I showed him Sir John's big tomb, I says, 'There's a power o' marble on it, and it's a mercy, too, for it must take it all to kip him quiet in his place from "walking,"' he *were* a bad un; he laughed, so as I were just frit* to hear him running on like that about things as is so out of the way and unchancy," went on Jared, much pleased to see how all this "aggravated" the boy.

"Well, he's a rare good un and a wise one too," cried Rupert, indignantly. "I won't stop for to hear ye running of him down. And more by token there's the last o' the nails," he went on, administering a vicious knock on its head as an outlet to his wrath. "And you mind as Mr. Morris left word ye was to see the ship carried down to the pool as soon as might be this afternoon," he called out angrily as he went off home.

"'Twill do presently," grumbled the sexton to his crony: there ain't a mossel o' hurry, and that young un's got so masterful and takes upon himself so as there's no bearing of him. And Mr. Morris spiles him, and he'll come to no good, anybody can see that," he ended, with much complacency. He was very jealous of Rupert, and not sorry to resist an order which came to him through the lad.

"They young uns thinks the world's made for 'um, and as it ain't long enow nor broad enow either. And yet it's but six feet of airth as ye gives the biggest on 'um, Master Jared, when all's said and done, as we all knows," mused old Simon sadly, resting on his staff as he looked out thoughtfully after the powerful young fellow striding away before him under the leafless trees.

* "Fright," past "frit." "And fright them from their hallowed haunts."—*Penseroso*.

Towards evening Rupert went down and brought up the punt-pole from the blacksmith's, and then crossed over by the pool on his way home. All was silent, however, and solitary when he reached it; there was no ship to be seen, and Claude had not yet arrived. He stood still for a moment, out of breath, for he had run almost the whole way, thinking that he was late: it was a sad-coloured, dull, leaden, forlorn-looking evening. The low wind was moaning dismally among the dry bare branches of the trees; the sky was grey, the earth was grey, the cold seemed to eat into one's vitals, and though there was no absolute fog, the thick air hung among the trees as if it were tangled among the branches and could not rise, and it was difficult to see twenty yards away. Suddenly he heard children's voices on the other side of a small spinney, close to the water, and he ran round to prevent them from going on the grey and treacherous-looking ice. As he came out on the other side, however, two boys slid off from the shore, the foremost of whom had hold of a stick with a sort of carved head, and Rupert saw that it was the delinquent Bobby Bathe.

"It ain't yourn, give it back agin," cried the bereaved owner in a lamentable voice.

Regardless of everything but the precious stolen goods, the boy slid forward, pursued by his enemy over the deep "hell hole"—which was full of black mud and weeds, regarded with peculiar dread in the neighbourhood, as supposed to be haunted by a gigantic pike of fabulous dimensions.

"Oh, Muster Rupert," cried the boy, "make 'im giv' un up; it's mine as he've a took."

"Come back," shouted Rupert, running forward; "mind you're just close to the great hole." But it was too late. As the second boy followed on the same track, the ice, which might have borne one, gave way with a tremendous crash; and in another moment the two little fellows were struggling in the water, grasping at the thin ice, which was cracking in all directions.

"Oh, Muster Rupert," screamed the boy, "help me."

"Run," cried he to a little girl who stood shivering on the brink, "tell them to bring down the punt and more poles."

Claude's words rushed into his head—to do to the utmost the present work, whatever it might be. He could not swim, but he wrenched the largest pieces of wood he could from the fence, and strove to make his way towards the hole. One head had gone down already: the ice broke under him long before he reached it, but he supported himself with the pole laid horizontally across the flakes. At length he caught one of the lads, and was trying to loosen the death-clasp on his arm, and anchor him on the piece of wood, when the other boy grasped hold of him under water, and, rendered thus completely powerless, he fought towards the land for his life, shouting with all his might.

Claude was not far from the church cottages when he met the

frightened child, and, without inquiring who had fallen in, he sent on the men whom he could find, and followed as soon as possible with the boat.

"The ship's all right, sir, you see; and I'm just a goin' to take it down: it's not been finished not but about an hour or so," said Jared, complacently, passing his hand across his mouth, as he came out from his tea, as if he was rather proud of his performance.

It was many minutes before any one reached the great pond.

"Who are in?" said Claude, when he got there.

"Oh, sir! Mr. Rupert went in after them, and he's gone down. We saw him but now; he's just gone down again."

"Rupert!" cried the poor fellow, in an agony. Was this the answer to his prayer for light?

The men soon launched the little craft, and, with rakes and the long poles used to fish up buckets from the deep-lying water of the wells, were sounding and dragging in all directions; but it was now nearly dusk, which impeded the work.

"That's them," cried one man, whose hook caught in the fast tangle of slimy undulating weeds, and who almost fell over as they gave way at last under the strain. "Us has got 'um now!" shouted a boy from the other end of the boat; but it was only a great branch which had drifted under the ice which he was tugging at so violently. The grim twilight was fast closing in before the bodies were found and brought up out of the ooze and leaves, all interwoven, the two lads clinging to Rupert in the convulsive death-clasp, so as entirely to prevent his saving their lives or his own. Claude hung over what had so lately been the warm heart and the seething brain of one who had been to him almost like a friend and child, in a sort of speechless misery. He unwound the cruel little clinging arms, and then three men took up their several burdens, and bore each to his home. He himself followed after Rupert as he was carried in the waning light into the old dark kitchen.

"What, drowned!" cried his grandfather, with much outcry. But Cecily said never a word, while, with feverish energy, she strove for hours, under Claude's directions, to bring him to life, long after all hope was over.

The Blizzards appeared, bringing every sort of help which they could think of; but she scarcely seemed to be conscious that they were there.

"Thank ye; thank ye kindly," she repeated, absently. "We don't want nothing."

She seemed jealous that any one should do anything but herself for her boy; but there was no sign or voice heard.

"We've done all we could," said the doctor, who had been going a fruitless round from one house to the other. "It's no use striving any longer," said he, looking at the two haggard faces before him; and he himself bore the poor lad in his arms, and laid him on a mattress in the parlour on the other side of the passage, and strove to persuade the worn-out workers to give up the struggle.

"It's very cold for him there," muttered the poor mother.

"He'll not feel cold nor heat any more," said the doctor, kindly.

But for all that, she took a great armful of fuel, and lighted a fire in the unused grate of the dreary, desolate chamber.

And, when the doctor was gone, they could not keep away from the one whose face was like an angel's, as he lay calm and bright, with a peaceful look which he had never had when living; as if, indeed, he had gone forth and won in his battle of life.

"And you say he's a good God," groaned poor Cecily, flinging herself down upon her boy, "when he gived him to me when I didn't want him, and tookt him away when he'd a growed into my very heart. Oh! Rupert lad, I were cold and crass, and I girded at ye and flawed wi' ye, and ye'll niver know how much I loved ye."

"He knows it now," said Claude, gently.

"He'd sit there this two or three year wi' his books and things; and, when his grandfu' just went on fretting and nagging at him, he'd just frown and twist hisself about a bit, as if he couldn't rightly stomach it; and then sometimes he'd up and say, so pleasant, 'Is there aught I can do, grandad?' And my tongue were like tied, and my heart were like dead, and I couldn't speak, nor tell 'im what were in me, for all 'twere there in my throat like choking."

Poor Claude was standing by in almost as much grief as her own. Something between son and brother had the boy been to him. "Very pleasant wert thou to me, my brother Jonathan," he thought to himself, as he looked down on him. But he only remembered his own grief as he saw that it gave him a right and a hold over the poor mother, whose sobs were now fearful to witness—the breaking up of the flood-gates, which, with very reserved people, is often frightfully violent.

He knelt down with her beside the body.

"Cecily," he said, "do you remember David? His son, whom he loved, was taken away from him too."

The poor woman looked up. She knew little of David's personal history; but this was a link between them which she acknowledged: all who had lost their children were now, she felt, akin to her.

"While the child was living he strove hard with his God to keep him. 'Who knows,' he said, 'whether the Lord will not be gracious and leave him to me?' But when it was dead he rose up and went about his work, for he said, 'I shall go to him, but he cannot come back to me.' You will go to him, Cecily, to his God and your God; we shall see him whom we love in the good place where there is rest for the troubled heart, both of us; let us try and make ourselves worthy. He strove very hard, Cecily, here, and he cared for you more than you knew of, poor mother; but you will know some day."

The poor woman listened at first absently, then anxiously; her sobs had ceased. "I shall go to him," she repeated over and over again as she still knelt by the body and rocked herself to and fro.

"Ah ! but you did for him as if he'd a been yer own, Mr. Morris. You've naught to mourn for up and down yer empty heart like," she broke out, suddenly.

"I loved him," said Claude, simply ; "that's what I did for him ; and so did you too, Cecily : you were very different these last years, and he felt it. Leave him in God's hands now ; lay your grief before the Lord, like Samuel's mother, and give up your son to Him who gave him, and will do for him better than we ever could, strive we never so much."

"And he won't know me mebbe up there," moaned the poor mother in her misery. "'Twill be all so different."

"I believe he will," said Claude. "Our Lord told the thief on the Cross He would know him in Paradise ; and I always think He'd a special tenderness for mothers." And gradually leading her up and on, he soothed and cheered and softened her till at length she was persuaded to lie down on the sofa, (she would not leave the body,) and covering her over with some of poor Rupert's now useless blankets, he turned, murmuring, "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away," wearied out mind and body, to his own home.

The nights are often brighter than the days in that climate, and the stars were shining brightly above a bank of cloud : the contrast seemed even strangely sad to Claude ; the quiet unresting march of Nature holding on her course unmoved, caring nothing for the woes of her children. A falling star shot across the sky, and vanished ; it was like the boy's life, he thought, as momentary, as imperfect, going out as suddenly. "And who, even when thou hast led us by ways which we have not known, hast still been showing mercy," said he, stumbling in the darkness, mental and physical.

CHAPTER XVI.

MAN PROPOSES.

THE next morning broke bright and inspiring.

"Come, Charles, let us set off," said Mr. Ayscough, in great spirits, half a dozen times at least during breakfast.

And as they rode together over the fields towards Avonhoe in the brisk cheery sunshine, the jumble of ambitious plans, and the aching void in the heart of the childless old man, sounded strange in the young man's ears.

There was no tall lad to be seen about the farm when they reached it, as Mr. Ayscough had hoped, and they fastened up their horses and opened the little wicket leading up through the ragged gooseberry-bushes, which Charles remembered so well on that former hunting morning.

The door of the kitchen stood open ; there was no answer to their call and they went in. A woman, stooping over the low fire on the hearth, was all that could be seen.

"Is there a lad here, your son? Is he at home?" said Charles, looking round, for he saw the old squire could hardly speak from agitation.

Cecily came forward, but there was a dazed and lost look in her eyes as she leant her tall frame against the table for support: she had evidently not heard what was said to her. "What was it you was pleased to want?" she asked.

"Squire Ayscough's come to inquire about the boy here," said the young man kindly, thinking the name alone would tell his story.

"He's dead," said Cecily, slowly, and without any feeling in her voice. "He died last night."

"Dead!" cried the old squire, pressing forward and seizing hold of her arm with an iron grasp which hurt her. "What do you mean?" he said sternly, as if it could not and should not be true.

"He was drowned yesterday a helping two boys out of the ice," she said, quietly shaking off the old man's hand, and leading the way into the next room, calmly, and without a tear. There he lay, almost in the place where Charles had last seen his father lie: the likeness was great, but it seemed to him even greater than it really was.

The old man leant against the mantelpiece; he dared not go up and look his misfortune in the face; Cecily hung over her boy with that strange unnatural calmness which grief brings after the first burst is over, before the loss seems to be realised. She put back a stray lock, stroked the cheek fondly, and did not speak.

Mr. Ayscough could bear it no longer, and rushed into the open air: it was a strange sight: he was so angry at the failure of his hopes that his passion seemed almost at the moment to kill his grief.

As Charles strove to calm him, Claude Morris came up. His sensitive conscience had reproached him for having left the parents of the other drowned boys to their fate, and he had been round that morning to see them, tired as he was; but his heart was with the child of his adoption, and he had come back to Hawkshill as soon as he dared. Charles almost embraced him as he explained what had happened, and asked for help. There was a quiet dignity about the young man which calmed the poor old squire, who turned to hear all that Claude had to tell of the lad's brief life and death.

"And she was married to him after all!" said Claude, when he had made out the whole story. "Have you told Cecily?"

"What should I tell her for now," answered old Ayscough, too much involved in the fog of his own sorrows to see distinctly anything beyond. "Surely there's no need that I should rip up poor Rupert's past as it were, now when it's no use," he added, a little jealously for his son.

"It's too late now to spare the dead—we must think of the living; she has lost the most of any, and ought to be looked to, though she hasn't a child now to give you. Come in and say it: if she has done half the wrong, she has borne all the penalty," said Claude, musing.

Cecily had mechanically gone back to her work—she was preparing for the burial of her boy—when the three men returned.

"Cecily, this is Mr. Ayscough; you remember Mr. Ayscough?" said Claude, kindly, as she put her hand to her head. "He had come to tell you that it was a marriage after all betwixt his son and you, and to ask you to let him have Rupert."

A gleam of joy passed over her face, but they mistook the cause. It was not the righting of her own fair fame, but the feeling that they could not take her boy away from her now: he was all her own thus at least.

"It's a great misfortune," sighed the poor old Ayscough, who had now given way entirely. "And there was such a career open for the lad; he'd have had all the estate and everything down at Scarsfield as his father would!"

"I'd liefer he were lying where he is," said Cecily, sternly, thinking of the past.

"He's neither chick nor child left, Cecily," whispered Claude; "they're all dead."

Her expression changed.

"All dead! all dead? Ah, we mun all bear wi' one another, and God A'mighty wi' us all; mayhap your heart's sorer even nor mine: I wish none so hard a lot. A' gone! a' gone! I'm sorry you've a lost this one, too, sir. But I'm glad as you can't take my boy away from me," she could not help muttering to herself.

"I should like to do whatever you may want now," said the squire.

"We've wanted for nothing," answered she, a little shortly; "what good will aught do for him now?"

"Morris, you'll manage all that: it had better pass through your hands," whispered Charles kindly.

As they passed out at the door they were met by old Benyam, who uncovered his white head as he recognized Charles Blount; he thought they were come to do honour to his dead.

"'Tis dolesome to be left one's lone so, ain't it, sir? Thank you for your kind respect of calling," said he.

The two returned silently to Hartley, where Mrs. Ayscough sat waiting in her room in patient misery for her husband's report.

"It was all no good, Millicent," he called out, as he flung himself down by her side half angrily; "the boy was dead, only last night, and the mother seemed almost glad, I thought. It was very strange!"

"Glad!" echoed she surprised.

"I mean she didn't care that we should take him. So very odd; it was all for his good!"

Mrs. Ayscough's instinct told her that something was wanting, and she went over immediately to Avonhoe.

Cecily's darkest mood was on her, and she stood silent and almost fiercely before the mother of the man who had blighted her whole life;

she wanted nothing of any of them, what did they want with her? they reminded her only of the wrong done and suffered in that painful past.

Millicent came shyly up the long dark room and stood for a moment uncertain—how should she win the stern woman before her to speak of the poor lad just gone, to forgive the dead father from her heart? "Poor Cecily" was all she said as she laid her hand tenderly on the desolate woman's arm.

There is a charm of manner often quite independent of talent or beauty, and quite as powerful as either: it is an invaluable mode of expression when there is anything to say which can hardly be put into words; a great gift, and Millicent had a large share of it. She was silent, looking almost timidly at the quivering lips which moved without a sound,—as they stood together, the mother and wife of the dead man whose legacy of wrong-doing was now the chief thing which he had left behind.

"Won't you let us grieve together, Cecily?" she said tearfully at last. "I have lost them all now; your boy was mine to lose though I had not the joy of him in life."

The poor woman sat suddenly down and sobbed piteously, as she threw her apron over her head with that reserve of great grief which cannot bear to be seen. And then at last they sat and sorrowed together over their dead, and it was a sort of comfort though there was hardly a word spoken: what had words to do over that burden of sorrow?

But with the stern sense of truth which characterized her, Cecily burst out at last with a great sob. "It weren't only him, poor fellow, as done badly: I 'knowledged I were wrong all the time. I thowt I were married to 'im, but I'm not sure as I shouldn't ha' done the same if I hadn't, for I loved him—'tis strange now to me to think how much, wi' my whole heart and strength. Eh, what a time 'tis ago,—but I allays knew 'twere wrong what I did, and I mustn't lay the burden o' my sins upo' his back as cannot say aught where he's a gone to!"

"I want for nothing," she replied to all offers of help; "we've never wanted for aught, neither him nor me. And Mr. Morris, he looked after him and taughted him so as he couldn't have been better done by an it had been the king's son he was. And there's nothing we wants now."

The old man, however, by no means took the same view of the matter, and seemed to find considerable comfort for the loss of his grandson in the new herd of splendid cattle which found their way to the solitary Hawkshill.

The last Ayscough was buried in the green old churchyard overlooking the plain, not far from the place where Joan Ayscough his "forbear," with the sad face and the unknown story, lies with the "jewel" in her hand, awaiting the day when all stories shall be told.

"And to think as he should have 'gone home' before any o' us old uns ripe for the harvest, and he so strong and hearty," mused old Simon, as he stood by the new-made grave.

And then the poor old father and mother returned sadly, childless,

empty-handed and empty-hearted, to the Border country. "The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft agee," moralised old Mackay.

Mrs. Ayscough, however, never rested till she drew Claude Morris after them, and established him in a living near Scarsfield, where he was as a son for the sake of the dead to that childless hearth, and softened the hard edges of her life for the poor lonely woman.

By the time Claude had left Avonhoe for the north, little Mary had learned to cling to "Rupert's mother," and Mary was the only being to whom that stern woman really unbent. Cecily lived on, but it was no longer in her hard and seared state: her dead boy had opened a way for her to light, and a ladder hung down for her from heaven, by which angels went up and down. There is a weird picture, the "Rembrandt," at Dulwich, where the dream alone of bright spirits comes floating softly down on Jacob as he lies upon the bare ground, and you feel that he is no longer desolate, and many a one who is gone does this loving office for the forlorn survivors.

Rupert had neither lived nor died in vain.

It is not living like a tree,
That makes a man to better be.

It was probably a better fate than if he had gone into unknown temptations with the strong passions which he inherited on either side. He was guarded against the storms of life; who could tell how he might have yielded to the sunshine?

A Prussian Soldier's Notes on the Prussian Army.

THE Prussian Government possesses in its army a most powerful agent wherewith to counteract the rapidly growing desire of the more intelligent portion of the nation for constitutional liberty. Although, sooner or later, a time must arrive when that liberty cannot be longer withheld, yet a radical change in the people itself will have to be effected in order that this consummation, so devoutly wished for, may be achieved. Passive resistance, as practised by the Liberal side of the Prussian Chambers before the war, is insufficient to break the power of Government, so long as the majority of the people takes a pride in its own laurel-hidden fetters, the army, the success of which in the late war with Austria has indefinitely prolonged the struggle for liberty.

It is an extremely curious process by which the Government has converted the "people in arms" into the most powerful instrument of a monarchy, absolute in everything but the name, and nowhere but in Prussia can we see a nation wielding the hammer to forge its own chains. Much admired as the Prussian army, no doubt, is, the Prussian people cannot possess a worse enemy than the countless multitude of its own helmeted sons.

The foundation of the army in its present organization has been laid by Frederick William III., in the well-known manifesto of 1818, "To my people." The landwehr or militia was created, and the principle adopted of liability to military service of every male and healthy Prussian subject of a certain age. This organization has been brought to a high state of perfection, and nobody can deny the fighting powers of the army. But the Liberals know that as cheerfully as their warriors marched up to the Austrian fire, so cheerfully will they advance to suppress an internal struggle for constitutional liberty,—a liberty which is simply impossible, all statements to the contrary notwithstanding, so long as the army exists in its present number and organization.

As I write these lines, almost within hearing of the majestic bass of Big Ben, which records the fleeting hours high above the stately pile of the Houses of Parliament, the home of constitutional liberty, I cannot help smiling at myself who, but ten years ago, formed a link in the Prussian nation's chain. But ten years ago I strutted down the celebrated street "Under the Lime-trees," in Berlin, attired in all the paraphernalia of a Prussian officer, and looking down upon every civilian, however much my superior in intelligence and accomplishments he might be. I wore the king's coat, and, like every one of my comrades, high or low, was determined to obey the king's orders, whatever they might be. We were

drilled in the maxim, "A soldier must act, not ask"—a maxim that, no doubt, still obtains in Prussia. Only ten years have gone by, and I am completely changed. I can now see the fetters plainly: I can see liberty crushed under the hobnailed heels of a well-drilled soldiery. However, a social revolution looms in the future; an eruption must take place when the volcano cannot longer restrain its pent-up fires.

To make an obnoxious institution popular it requires nothing but to make the people believe it an institution of their own creation. This stratagem has wonderfully succeeded in Prussia. Nine Prussians out of ten glory in the army, but the tenth hates it with a fierce hatred.

The governing principle in the Prussian army is subordination in its most exhausting form, entire abandonment of free will in every respect. A most rigorous military code of laws enforces obedience in all cases. The commissioned officers form a military aristocracy, whose influence on the political and social affairs of the country cannot be overrated. The connecting link between commissioned officers and men is formed by the non-commissioned officers, whose position in the army is extremely important. A young man who enters the army as a profession has his career marked out for the remainder of his life, as nearly all Government appointments, not requiring special or superior training, are at the disposal of soldiers who have served a certain number of years, or who, by some special cause, have obtained a claim on Government. Policemen, railway-guards, custom-house officers, tipstiffs, bailiffs, and the countless multitude of the lower officials are chosen from amongst the non-commissioned officers, whilst corresponding offices of a higher position are reserved to commissioned officers. It is thus Government collects a host of dependants around it whose influence on elections is often decisive. The progeny of the military aristocracy furnishes part of the material for vacant commissions, whilst the remainder are filled up by appointments from amongst the volunteers of all classes who are well educated and possessed of some means. Very different elements are thus brought in contact with each other in the various regiments, but the esprit-de-corps and routine of service soon assimilate them, and they all end in becoming the willing instruments of Government.

A great many officers are educated in the cadet-houses, of which there are several in the provinces and one in Berlin, where the young men receive their final training. Of these institutions I will but say that the education they give is utterly useless for any other profession than the military. The greater number of officers is appointed from amongst the volunteers (*avantagés*), who enter the army as privates, having to find a guarantee for a moderate monthly allowance that varies in the different regiments and branches of the service.

I now propose to give a short narrative of my experience of soldiering in Prussia, in the course of which I shall have many opportunities of introducing various phases of military life in that country.

In the year 185—, having passed the examination for the university,

and thereby obtained exemption from the ensign's examination, which is not technical, I proposed to my guardian to obtain for me an avantageurship in the *ath* Artillery regiment. Not being noble, nor yet of a military or "höhere Beamten-Familie (high public officer's family)," there was at first some slight difficulty; but at last the colonel of the *ath* consented to see me, and, taking the train for the garrison town, I went, I confess, in a state of trepidation to face the mighty commander. I found his residence by the gunner who stood sentry at the door, and, mounting up a broad staircase, I had a peep through a glass door, behind which stood a tall man with hollow cheeks from loss of teeth, a bald head, and attired in a faded dressing-gown, who, so soon as he perceived me, made a sudden bolt through another door. I rang the bell and a servant came out, to whom I gave my card. He soon returned and conducted me into the colonel's study—a narrow little room, conspicuous for the absence of all books but the *Manual of Artillery*, the *Military Rank List*, and sundry instruction books. A smell of tobacco pervaded it, and numerous swords, helmet-cases and epaulet-boxes, betrayed the profession of its owner. I waited patiently for ten minutes, when I heard a quick, short step, the door opened and the mighty colonel entered. My heart shook in my bosom, but I thought of Horace's lines, "Integer vitæ scelerisque purus," and standing upright in imitation of the recruits, whose preparatory exercises I had often witnessed, I made a most reverential bow.

The colonel looked twenty years younger than when I had seen him behind the door. With teeth white as ivory, a black, curly, but closely cropped head of hair, a waist like a lady's, he stood before me as straight as a ramrod, gorgeous with silver epaulets, and resplendent with orders on his left breast.

He took an ocular survey of me before he condescended to address me. "Hm, hm," he said, "we are rather small, but, being young, we may yet grow. Any relations in the army?" "Yes, I had one, who unfortunately had been arrested, as he prepared himself in 1849 to join the Hungarian national army." "Not a creditable connection, that, by any means. We have passed the university examination? Indeed? Not much to speak of: I would rather have none of you college youngsters in my regiment. We have only the certificate 'satisfactorily' in geometry and arithmetic. We will go to Y——, join there the fortress-division, and pass another examination in mathematics before we are sent to the Academy. Yes, we will start to-morrow and report ourselves at noon. That will do. Good morning!" He made a military salute, and the interview was ended.

I had not much time left to make the necessary preparations, but the early morning train of the following day carried me, with a number of similarly situated young gentlemen, to Y——. We were rather boisterous, and our conversation betraying our future calling excited some disparaging remarks from a party of jovial students, our seniors by a few years, who occupied an adjoining compartment. One of them, a fair-headed, goodhumoured-looking young man, who wore the cap and colours

of the Teutonia Association, said sharply, looking at me, "What a good soldier the little one will make; the bullets will have some difficulty to hit him, he is so small!" I was about to retort angrily, when a sententious east-Prussian young nobleman, about to join a regiment of lancers, interrupted me, saying, "Pray do not take any notice of these young civilians, who will never have an opportunity to learn manners, and cannot give satisfaction!" This remark was received by the students with a shout of laughter, but the train stopping just then at the place of their destination, they got out and we were left in possession of the field. There were six of us destined for the 24th Artillery regiment, several the sons of clergymen, and one or two belonging, like myself, to a mercantile family. But the other *avantageurs* were evidently all members of military families, and their conversation dwelt chiefly upon cousin so-and-so of the infantry and brother so-and-so of the cavalry.

At eleven A.M. we arrived in the old fortress which was to be for some time the theatre of our military achievements. Here we separated—the artillery *avantageurs* taking cabs to one of the suburbs, where the barracks of the fortress-division were situated.

At twelve o'clock, precisely, we were on the parade-ground of the division, where a burly sergeant-major called out, "Hallo, younkers, are you the *avantageurs*?" On our replying in the affirmative, he ordered us to advance, and walked up to the adjutant. That officer, a kind, jovial and wealthy young man, introduced us to the major in command of the division, who, after a few words of admonition, chiefly repetitions of "Be good soldiers, boys, be good soldiers: a good soldier is the noblest creature under the sun," distributed us amongst the four fortress companies, two, besides myself, being attached to the first, which rejoiced in a known martinet for a captain.

We were then conducted to the barracks by the sergeant-major of the company. Having been measured and registered, we were led into a gallery of the bastion, where stood a long twenty-four-pounder gun, on the breech of which were engraved the royal initials. There the adjutant joined us, and, requesting us to put our forefingers upon the sacred letters, he read the form of oath to us, which we slowly repeated. By it we entered into a solemn obligation to serve his Majesty faithfully and truly, on land and at sea, &c. &c. We were now duly sworn Prussian soldiers, and had become different beings from civilians, being amenable to military jurisdiction only in all cases of misdemeanor or felony, civil or military, and under orders to have as little intercourse as possible with civilians, whose company, according to the instructions, is rarely beneficial and often dangerous. A barrier was thus drawn between my former associates and myself, and it required all my youthful enthusiasm for the cloth of many colours to cheer my falling spirits.

We were now marched before the captain of the company, under whose immediate command we had been placed by the major, and upon whom alone depended our career for the next twelve months. Tall and

erect he stood before us, his sheathed sword in the left hand, the right busy with twirling a long pair of dark mustachios. He looked at us, without speaking, for at least ten minutes, and then said, "You will be placed under-Sergeant M——, whom I have chosen to drill you, because he shows no favour to young gentlemen. You will live in barracks, where I have ordered two rooms to be kept for you. You will conform, in every respect, to the regulations, until I find I can allow you some indulgence, which I possibly may not. I expect you to do your duty; and if you don't by — I will make you. Sergeant d'armes, take these gunners to the stores and issue their kits to them."

Having been duly invested in our regimentals, we were conducted to our apartments. They were roomy enough, but very scantily furnished, and, being under a shell-proof vault, felt damp and chilly. However, we were determined to make the best of a bad bargain, and with the addition of some chairs and a sofa, purchased out of our moderate funds, the apartments were made habitable. We engaged a gunner each to attend upon us and settled down in the daily routine of drill. The sergeant, our drill-instructor, did not prove the Tartar we expected to find him; may be he feared retaliation on our part, when we should have received our commissions.

The mysteries of goose-step and facings having been duly mastered by us, we commenced gun-drill and daily riding lessons. It was now the beginning of winter, and every morning at six o'clock we had to rise and walk a distance of nearly four miles to the riding-school, where a captain of the mounted artillery seemed to find a peculiar amusement in instructing us. He was kind, but fond of practical jokes. At that time the Prussians rode with very long stirrups; and even those of us who had been at home in the saddle from childhood found it very difficult indeed to retain our seats in the proscribed position. However, that was nothing in comparison with the tortures we suffered when riding without stirrups upon the high Hungarian saddle. We tumbled in all directions, and it was really interesting to witness how fast the number of riderless horses increased, and how gently, even in trot or canter, the animals stepped over the prostrate forms of their riders. The captain would teach us carefully for one hour or so, and then, standing in the centre of the ring, would say, cracking his long tandem-whip, "Younkers, you have had your fun; now I am going to have mine. Trot faster! faster!" and when the last of us had dropped, he threw down his whip, and, shaking with laughter, dismissed us.

However, we soon learnt to maintain our balance in the high saddles, yet I often wondered how the authorities could expect a man to fight from his horse when his attention must necessarily be engaged in maintaining his equilibrium. About this time my first collision with my superiors occurred. A horse had been told off to me, and I had engaged a gunner to attend to him. One morning, before our usual lesson, I stood in his stall, ready to lead him out, when our captain (not the riding-

master) came to inspect me. He found a minute spec on the bit and pointed it out to me. "How dare you keep your accoutrements in such a filthy state?" he angrily inquired. I stood at attention, and replied, "At your orders, captain! I will take care that my man will be more careful in future!" "Your man!" retorted the captain. "Your man, indeed! Who ever heard of a private gunner keeping a man? D— you, sir, I will teach you your duties before I have done with you. You will report yourself in marching-dress in my quarters at five o'clock every morning until further orders. Left-about face, march!" In order to obey this command I had to get up every morning, during one week, at half-past three A.M. with the thermometer below freezing-point; and my military ardour received a considerable damper.

Shortly after Christmas I passed my examination in mathematics, and obtained my promotion to the rank of bombardier, the lowest non-commissioned officer who wears, as a distinguishing mark, a gold lace round his cuffs. A few weeks later, repairs becoming necessary in our part of the barracks, we received permission to live in the town, and very glad we were to leave the casemates, than which no less salubrious quarters could be found.

In the same house with me lived a corporal of hussars, who prepared himself for the third time to pass the ordeal of the ensign's examination. Baron M—— was a merry, kind-hearted fellow, but very illiterate, a fact he took not the least trouble to disguise. "Upon my honour," he said, as he lay at full length upon my sofa, smoking a pipe, "upon my honour, comrade, I cannot see the use of much learning to a hussar; I can manage my horse and my arms as well as most men, and I am sure, if I knew Latin, I could not do it a bit better. And as to history, that is all rubbish. We Prussians are destined to make history, not to learn it. The last time I was plucked they gave for an historical essay 'a short biography of Charlemagne,' as if I cared for the old fellow. I took my sheet of foolscap, and, heading it in due form, I wrote as the sum total of my acquaintance with the monarch, 'Charlemagne was a great man,' signed it Bruno Baron M——, *avantageur* in the 27th regiment of hussars, and fancy, they had the impudence to pluck me! The next time they will let me pass as a matter of grace, and in another year I shall have my commission." He was right. From him I learnt that *avantageurs* in cavalry regiments are much better off than gunners. They are treated as equals by their officers, mess with them, and, providing they show spirit and pluck, have a very easy life of it. In most cavalry regiments, and all regiments of the guards, the artillery and engineers excepted, all the officers are noblemen.

Our relations with the civilian world were very distant indeed. This engenders a spirit of jealousy, which, more than any other cause, serves to maintain that class distinction upon which the military aristocracy is based.

One of my duties now consisted in the drilling of a batch of recruits

in the service-instructions, than which a more curious manual is not in existence. It enters upon all duties of the soldier, the various ranks and their distinguishing marks, the relation to the civilians, and so forth ; and I derived much amusement from the stupid answers I daily received. A story was told in our company of a poor recruit who had been very harshly treated. He replied to the question "What is a soldier?" with more truth than discretion, "A poor, tortured fellow!" Another, who was examined as to the nature of pumice-stone, which is much used in the cleaning of bits, replied, "Pumice-stone is, When I have none I use sand." I had, in my turn, to attend the class for the instruction of non-commissioned officers, presided over by the senior lieutenant. A comrade of mine, who was not given to much study, got into disgrace for what he considered a very clever reply to the question "What would you do, were you in command of a powder convoy and a thunderstorm threatened?" "I would, without delay, rig a lightning-conductor," he replied, "and retire with men and horses to a safe distance from the powder-waggons!"

Towards the beginning of spring we received a batch of recruits, and I was amongst those non-commissioned officers to whom the task of drilling a squad was allotted. It was late in the afternoon, after a weary march, when they arrived under command of two corporals. The greater number were raw Polish peasant lads, wearing long blue linen coats and four-cornered fur caps. Their long boots they preferred carrying at the end of a stick on their shoulders. A more awkward squad I never saw. The poor fellows stared vacantly at the crowd of soldiers around them, who were by no means sparing in their jokes. A warm bath had been prepared in one of the large, bleak dining-rooms, and one after the other they were ordered to perform their ablutions without the water being once changed, although the number of bathers could not have been less than fifty. All having bathed, they underwent a shearing operation, and then received their dinner, an ample quantity of cabbage and potatoes, boiled with a little meat, and a pound and a half of good commissariat rye bread. Four or five of the recruits were of the middle classes ; and amongst them were two Jews, whose faces clearly indicated their abhorrence of everything military. One of them made a very good gunner ; the other showing, after six months' service, signs of consumption, was discharged.

The drill commenced next day, and until the recruits had mastered the rudiments and learnt to distinguish the various ranks and the salutes due to them, they were not permitted to leave the barracks. We had to use the Polish language at first, because scarcely one of them knew a word of German.

The authorities are very decided in their orders in regard to the treatment of recruits, yet brutal behaviour towards them by the drill-instructors is by no means of rare occurrence. Cuffs and kicks, with applications of the flat of the sword, are often resorted to. Curses are also frequently indulged in, and their variety testifies to the fruitful imagination of the Prussian non-commissioned officers.

Ill treatment is naturally not without deplorable consequences, and one recruit of our company, who, being very awkward, was especially ill treated, in a fit of despair chopped off his right forefinger, the loss of which renders one unfit for service. This being a punishable offence, he was tried before a court-martial, and sentenced to serve the remainder of his time in a labour company. However, the evidence adduced clearly proving ill treatment by the instructor, an ensign who had been rusticated from the Academy in Berlin, that officer was sentenced to a month's close confinement.

Our garrison town was also the seat of the Army Division School, where the ensigns of the infantry and cavalry regiments, as also those of the rifle battalions, were prepared for the lieutenant examination, which must be passed before a commission in Berlin. The instruction is technical, and comprises tactics, fortification, knowledge of arms, surveying and drawing, &c., a little of each of which goes a long way before the commission in Berlin. The eighty or hundred ensigns, who were in attendance at the school, contributed not a little to the fun of the place, and the two or three public gardens were their usual place of resort. As a rule, cash is an extremely scarce commodity with Prussian soldiers of all ranks, and there were but few of the ensigns who had not run up a catalogue of debts, which was out of all proportion to their allowances or expectations.

Naturally, quarrels amongst high-spirited lads are not of rare occurrence; and as the code of honour is very strict, duels were frequently fought. The straight sword, sharpened twelve inches on both sides from the point, was commonly used, the combatants being bandaged in all vital parts. One or two "bloody cuts," or time, terminated an encounter that is rarely dangerous. Another weapon used was the cavalry sword, by which very serious cuts are occasionally inflicted; and I well remember how, later, in Berlin, a personal friend of mine, the son of a well-known German poet, received a cut on the skull that brought on brain-fever, and ultimately death. Pistol duels are of very rare occurrence, and are only resorted to to settle disputes of a very serious nature.

In the midst of summer we commenced our march to the town of M——, distant about sixty miles, where the annual shot and shell practice takes place. We walked the whole distance, with cloaks rolled and knapsacks regularly packed—not a small load, I promise you, for a youngster who has not done growing. A comrade, on being ordered by the captain to unpack his knapsack for inspection, revealed as its sole contents a novel, a well-filled cigar-case and a small dressing-case, having sent on his kit surreptitiously in a baggage-waggon. He was sentenced to a week's confinement in barracks after our arrival in M——.

The practice over, we received a week's leave previous to our entering upon a three years' course of study in the United Artillery and Engineers' School at Berlin. That institution gives an excellent professional education to young men who desire to profit by it. But I believe I am right in stating that, especially during the first two years, a great many ensigns take far more interest in the sights and pleasures of the Prussian capital

than in their studies, and a removal of the academy to some quiet country place would be of decided advantage to many young men, who in Berlin are on the high-road to ruin.

During the first year we had to live in quarters provided for us in the school-building, which is situated in the well-known street "Under the Lime-trees." Our apartments were small, not very clean, and poorly furnished. The restaurant in connection with the academy was also very indifferently managed, and the dinners which we were obliged to take there were by no means nice.

Several "officers of inspection" lived in the building and superintended our practical and theoretical training. Here I was again unlucky in the chance that brought me under the orders of a regular Tartar. A number of invalid old soldiers attended to the cleaning of our rooms and accoutrements, and, from sheer weakness and imbecility, they were often unable to satisfy the many demands made upon their services. Certain hours in the evenings being set aside for study, it was usual for the officers of inspection to visit us then, and, according to the rules of the service, the senior ensign had to make a formal report of the rank and number of the inhabitants of his room. On one occasion Captain H. entered our study, and I, being the senior ensign, jumped up and reported, "Room No. x is inhabited by Ensigns R. and S. of the x th, and Ensign T. of the y th regiments." "Your lamp is in a filthy state," our Tartar remarked. "At your orders, captain!" I replied. "Invalid N. is unwell, and I did not wish to call him up again." The captain frowned, and asked, "Why did you not clean the lamp yourself?" As we were not expected to do any menial work, I replied, "I was not aware that such a task devolved on me; besides, I am quite ignorant of the process of lamp-cleaning!" "You will report yourself in half an hour at my quarters, and inform me how a lamp is cleaned." And Tartar walked off, rattling his regulation sword behind him. I foamed with anger, but there was no help for me, report myself I must. I donned my uniform and helmet, and at the appointed time knocked at the captain's door. I entered, marched up to him, and reported, "At your orders, captain, a dirty lamp is best cleaned with an old woollen stocking." The captain got into a great rage, put me under arrest, and reported me for impertinence to the colonel in command, who had no option but to punish me by confining me to my quarters for a week. At the same time he rebuked the captain, and reminded him that "his youngers ought to be treated as gentlemen." I must here explain that a Prussian ensign is a kind of hybrid between a commissioned and a non-commissioned officer, messing with the former, but ranking with the latter.

The Sunday forenoon was generally devoted to the fighting of the duels that had been contracted during the week. The large dining-room was converted into an arena, the tables being ranged along the walls, and upon them, in their chairs, sat the spectators. The academical staff-surgeon was in attendance with his plasters and needles, and sometimes a

dozen fights had come off and a dozen patches been made before dinner at one P.M.

The majority of the private soldiers belong to the agricultural classes, who in Prussia, as elsewhere, form the least intelligent portion of the people, and take very little, if any, interest in political matters. Hence they form an admirable material for the army of an absolute government. The young soldiers, when thoroughly drilled, are, as a rule, well treated, and full of youthful enthusiasm ; rejoicing in the liberty from hard manual work, possessing ample opportunities to indulge in the cheap and novel pleasures of a garrison town, the recruits soon like their new life. Officered by men who form a favoured and exclusive caste in the community, I believe that nine-tenths of the army would blindly obey the most despotic orders, and the government know well that it can place reliance on the army.

Any one looking at the Prussian army estimates, and observing the proportion of that part of the public expenditure to the general revenue, will see at a glance how fearful a burden the army must be to the nation. All other public interests are made subservient to the military, and, in consequence, the salaries of public officials are absurdly low in Prussia.* An officer corresponding in rank to an English county-court judge receives a salary with which any ordinary merchant's clerk in London would be dissatisfied.

T. P.

The Santals.

IN the month of July, 1855, the Anglo-Indian population of Bengal, and notably of Calcutta, was seized with a sudden panic. It was reported that a horde of barbarians, wild and untameable as the followers of Alaric or Attila, were in full march towards the capital of British India, laying waste with fire and sword the populous and fertile district of Beerbhoom, and marking their course with the blackened ruins of smoking villages: that thousands of cattle were driven off to the highlands, the police completely mastered, and several English residents put to death, including two ladies. The feeble detachments of sepoy troops which were, in the first instance, hurried to the front to oppose the further advance of the frenzied multitude, were forced back by overwhelming numbers, and compelled to await the arrival of reinforcements. As these came up to the scene of action, the insurgents were mown down almost without resistance, for their only weapons were bows and arrows.

"It was not war," wrote Major Jervis: "they did not understand yielding. As long as their national drums beat, the whole party would stand, and allow themselves to be shot down. Their arrows often killed our men, and so we had to fire on them as long as they stood. When their drums ceased, they would move off for about a quarter of a mile; then their drums began again, and they calmly stood till we came up and poured a few volleys into them. There was not a sepoy in the war who did not feel ashamed of himself. The prisoners were for the most part wounded men. They upbraided us with fighting against them. They always said it was with the Bengalis they were at war, not with the English. If a single Englishman had been sent to them who understood their wrongs, and would have redressed them, they declared there would have been no war. * * * They were the most truthful set of men I ever met—brave to infatuation. A lieutenant of mine had once to shoot down seventy-five men before their drums ceased, and the party fell back."

For four whole months these undisciplined barbarians continued to devastate the country. Repelled at one point, they turned up at another, easily outmarching regular troops, and dispersing only to gather together again on the flank or rear of the force with which they were unable to cope in the open field. At length a cordon of outposts was formed, and by degrees the Santals were pushed back to their native hills. Within the next three months tranquillity was restored, and thousands of the rebels were "peacefully at work upon a new road."

On the suppression of this singular rebellion, inquiries were instituted into its origin, and then it was discovered that, in the beginning, nothing

worse was contemplated than a march of the entire population to Calcutta to lay at the feet of the Governor-General a petition that had been rejected by the local authorities. In truth, the grievances of which this unhappy people complained had become perfectly intolerable. Until the close of the eighteenth century the Santals had held themselves aloof from the lowland Hindus, beyond making annual inroads into the territory lying at the foot of their hills. "Every winter," says Mr. Hunter, "as soon as they had gathered in the rice-crop and celebrated their harvest-home, the whole nation moved down upon the plains, hunting in the forests, and plundering the open country on the line of march. After three months' excellent sport, they returned laden with booty to celebrate the February festival in their own villages." These depredations, however, ceased shortly after Lord Cornwallis's assumption of the direct administration of Beerbhoom; and the general extension of tillage, which resulted from the permanent settlement of the land-tax in 1790, led to the very general employment of the Santals in bringing the new lands into cultivation. Fond of agricultural labour, these hill-men settled in considerable numbers on the lower slopes of the Rajmahal district, and gradually reclaimed from waste large tracts of fertile land depopulated by the famine of 1770, and which had since relapsed into jungle.

In this state matters continued until 1832, when the British Government was happily inspired to surround the hill territory with a ring-fence of stout masonry pillars. Up to this boundary line the lowland Hindus speedily converted the jungle into cultivated fields; but the rich valleys intervening between the hills and the pillars remained neglected, until the half-civilized Santals were tempted to take possession and form a living barrier between the wild mountaineers and the timid Hindus. The earliest colonists, paying only a nominal rent for their lands, and combining the pleasures of the chase with agricultural labour, were not long in sending for their kinsmen, so that within the short space of six years this neutral ground contained fully 8,000 inhabitants, established in forty different villages, while at present the population within the ring-fence is estimated at 200,000.

Meanwhile others of the hill-men moved down to the plains in gangs, and settled themselves as day-labourers wherever their services were in requisition, and especially in the neighbourhood of indigo-factories. These little communities, however, live apart from the Hindus, and still preserve their national customs. "Every winter, after the indigo is packed, numbers of the labourers visit their native villages, and seldom return unaccompanied with a train of poor relations, who look forward to the wages of the spring sowing season as the soldiers of Alaric contemplated the spoils of Lombardy." In some respects these emigrants were better off than the Santals who had settled in the rich valleys at the foot of the hills. The latter were infested by Hindu hucksters, who plundered that honest, truthful people without scruple or remorse.

"They cheated the poor Santal," writes the author of *The Annals*

of *Rural Bengal*, "in every transaction. The forester brought his jars of clarified butter for sale; the Hindu measured it in vessels with false bottoms: the husbandman came to exchange his rice for salt, oil, cloth, and gunpowder; the Hindu used heavy weights in ascertaining the quantity of grain, light ones in weighing out the articles given in return. If the Santal remonstrated, he was told that salt, being an excisable commodity, had a set of weights and measures peculiar to itself. The fortunes made by traffic in produce were augmented by usury. A family of new settlers required a small advance of grain to eke out the produce of the chase while they were clearing the jungle. The Hindu dealer gave them a few shillings'-worth of rice, and seized the land as soon as they had cleared it and sown the crop. Another family, in a fit of hospitality, feasted away their whole harvest, and then opened an account at the grain-dealer's, who advanced enough to keep them above starvation during the rest of the year. From the moment the peasant touched the borrowed rice, he and his children were the serfs of the corn-merchant. * * * Year after year the Santal sweated for his oppressor. If the victim threatened to run off into the jungle, the usurer instituted a suit in the courts, taking care that the Santal should know nothing of it till the decree had been obtained, and execution taken out. Without the slightest warning, the poor husbandman's buffaloes, cows, and little homestead were sold, not omitting the brazen household vessels which formed the sole heirloom of the family. Even the cheap iron ornaments, the outward tokens of female respectability among the Santals, were torn from the wife's wrists."

All this had to be endured in silence. There was no redress to be had from those law-courts which had been so hasty to legalize injustice and rapine. The civil station might be a hundred miles off, and the English magistrate have thought more of collecting the revenue than of protecting the poor and the friendless. So for a while iniquity throve, and the Hindu usurer fattened upon the spoils of the helpless, simple-minded Santal. There was, however, an alternative. Such as would not consent to expend their lives as bondsmen, could throw up their clearings and flee into the jungle; but for families even this refuge was inaccessible. Sometimes a man would sell his liberty for a few shillings wherewith to bury his father, and toiled on the rest of his days in bondage, the paltry debt increasing by compound interest at 85 per cent., till all idea of repayment faded away, and the children inherited the serfage of their sire. But in 1854 a wonderful change came over the country. In that year a railway was commenced, which for 200 miles was to skirt the Santal hills. Yet a few years later 20,000 labourers were needed in Beerbhoom alone to raise embankments, cut through eminences, fill up hollows, and construct many-arched bridges. The work was severe; but wages were high in proportion. There was employment for women and children as well as for men; "and in a few months the Santals, who had taken service, came back with their girdles full of coin, and their women covered with silver jewellery, 'just

like the Hindus,' as their astonished clans-people remarked." Here was a certain fortune for the free population. A whole clan would go off, bag and baggage, their bows and arrows in their hands, and the national drum beating in front; and after a few months of arduous toil would return with money in their purse and "on hospitable thoughts intent." It was far otherwise, however, with the bondsmen, who laboured without hope or reward, and without cessation or rest, and foresaw no termination to their hapless lot but in death.

It is not surprising, therefore, that an under-current of excitement should have agitated the Santal community during the cold weather of 1854-55. The crops that year happened to be unusually abundant, while the price of grain was kept up by the sudden influx of capital. Nevertheless, the disquietude and restlessness of the people increased from week to week. The rich determined to be no longer the dupes, as the poor resolved to be no longer the slaves, of the over-reaching Hindus. Representatives and exponents of the popular feeling are seldom wanting at such a crisis. In this particular instance two brothers stepped forward as the heaven-appointed champions of the people, and produced a quantity of scraps of paper in proof of their divine mission. These slips were circulated throughout the country, just as chupatties were distributed throughout the North-West Provinces previous to the Mutiny, and prepared men's minds for something eventful. Their object appears to have been to attract the attention of the English Government; but as no acts of violence were reported, and the collection of revenue was not disturbed, no notice whatever was taken of the Santal "Fiery Cross." They then applied to the Commissioner to redress their wrongs; but that functionary was busied about too many things to pay much heed to the complaints of the barbarians, men of far less consequence in his eyes than the tax-paying Hindus of whom they complained. "God is great," sighed the Santal leaders; "but He is too far off." So they took the matter into their hands, and despatched emissaries to every valley with branches of their national Sal-tree. The people obeyed the signal, and, armed with bows and arrows, gathered in tens of thousands to the place of rendezvous. There was then nothing to be done but to move onward; and on the 30th of June, 1855, the vast horde set out for Calcutta.

So long as their provisions lasted they molested no one; but when their scanty supply of food was exhausted they began to lay their hands on whatever came nearest. On the 7th of July a native inspector of police met the advanced guard of the wild array, and was charged by the two brothers to "levy a tax of ten shillings on every Hindu family in his jurisdiction, for the subsistence of their followers." Unhappily for himself, he had accepted a bribe from the Hindu usurers to apprehend the leaders on a false charge of burglary. Somehow, the fact became known, and, on being taxed with his duplicity, he confessed that he had undertaken to carry off the brothers as his prisoners. These bade him do his duty, if he had really any proof against them. Deceived by their submissive

demeanour, the officer was rash enough to order his guards to pinion the leaders. The order was hardly given when himself and nine of his men were seized and bound. "After a hurried trial, the chief leader, Sidu, slew the corrupt inspector with his own hands, and the police left nine of their party dead in the Santal camp."

From that moment all discipline was lost. The mighty wave swept on, marking its course with devastation, and the trembling Hindus fled in affright from their plundered homesteads. By what means this formidable movement was ultimately suppressed has already been told; and then, for the first time, the British Government discovered that the system of administration which suited the staid Hindu tradesman or land-holder was totally unfitted for the comparatively uncivilized, impulsive mountaineer. Measures were at once adopted to prevent the recurrence of a similar disaster. The debtor was protected against the sharp practice of his creditor; serfage was rooted out; false weights and measures were visited with condign punishment; and abundant employment on equitable terms was provided for the Santals on the railways and on the tea-plantations of Assam. "Their civilization, however, has not kept pace," says Mr. Hunter, "with their material prosperity." They decline to receive instruction in Bengali, a language which they abhor, while the Government are strangely backward in establishing vernacular schools, forgetful or heedless of their non-Aryan extraction.

What then are these Santals? From what race are they sprung? In what respect does their language differ from that of the Bengalis of the plains? Whence originates their hereditary antipathy to their lowland neighbours? On what grounds are they entitled to a simpler form of government than is required for the acute and litigious Hindu? How is it, in short, that dwelling in the midst of Hindus they come to differ so widely in manners, customs, religion, and language? And, above all, how does it happen that a district barely a hundred miles from Calcutta should have been scarcely better known to the British Government than the independent State of Bhootan, or than the trans-Himalayan Tatars?

These obvious and momentous questions can be only cursorily answered within the limited space at our disposal, but they are treated at sufficient length, and in a masterly style, by Mr. W. W. Hunter, in the valuable work to which we are indebted for the materials of this paper. Favourably known as the members of the two chief branches of the Indian service have ever been for their literary talents and industry, it is no exaggeration to regard this admirable volume as the first step towards a higher and more philosophical order of literature than has hitherto emanated from the Anglo-Indian community. Many profound scholars both in this country and in Germany—and even in France—have written learnedly upon the Aryan emigration, and still more so upon the language and literature of that conquering race. But for Mr. Hunter it has been reserved to study an aboriginal race amidst its native mountains, to mark the reciprocal influence of two phases of civilization at their point of

contact, to trace the debased superstition of the modern Bengali to the admixture of monotheistic Brahmanism with the nature-worship of a primitive people, and, by implication, to delineate the aspect of Northern India prior to the armed immigration of the fair-complexioned race that, radiating from Central Asia, crossed the Himalayas and swooped down upon the Gangetic valley. For many generations the Aryan race steadily developed itself in what Manu calls the Middle Land, or the extensive region enclosed between the Himalayan and the Vindhyan ranges, and extending to the eastward as far as Allahabad. The colonization of this wide-spreading territory is supposed to date from the close of the Vedic era, when the original "loose confederacy of patriarchal communities" gradually assumed the form of "several well-knit nations, each secured by a strong central force, but disfigured by distinctions of caste, destined in the end to be the ruin of the Sanskrit people." The fourfold classification which at present prevails among the Hindus did not, however, exist in the earliest ages of the Aryan settlement. It took its rise in the Middle Land long after the work of conquest was completed, and when a state of meditative indolence had succeeded to the active and energetic life of the first settlers. Whether it originated with Manu, or was only systematized and expounded in the book which goes by his name, is nothing to our present purpose. It suffices to know that this artificial classification never found its way into Lower Bengal, though the Aryan conquerors, availing themselves of the right of might, constituted themselves the aristocratic order, and as such assumed all to be Brahmans, the recognized aristocracy of the Middle Land, from which they had issued forth. But notwithstanding their assumption of the name, the Brahmans of Lower Bengal have never been admitted to an equality by the Brahmans of that Middle Land, who even now regard the former as an inferior race both from a social and a religious point of view. At the same time it is indisputable that social distinctions in Lower Bengal are more defined and less tolerant than in almost any other part of India, though not owing to caste, as understood in the North-West Provinces.

This region was already peopled when the migrating horde of Aryans moved eastward from the Middle Land, following the course of the Ganges. The aborigines were in every respect an inferior race: short of stature, of squat square figures, of dark complexion, and "inarticulate utterance." Their language, too, was barbarous and "ignobly objective," destitute of terms to express the relationship of cause and effect, and incapable of expressing the emotions and sentiments of man's inner life. They were also omnivorous, perhaps even addicted to cannibalism, and, in consequence of their gluttonous habits, were contemptuously described by the abstemious, clean-feeding Aryans, as "The Raw Eaters." In addition to all this the Dasayans, as they were termed, indulged in a fetish-worship. Of the unity of the Deity and the immortality of the soul they had not the slightest conception. Of eternity they had not so much as the glimmer

of an idea. Death was the end of life. There was nothing beyond. The dead body was hid away in a hole in the earth, and the kinsmen of the deceased, having bathed in the nearest stream, returned to their ordinary occupations. Or if, in certain districts, the act of burial was attended with funeral ceremonies, it was only as an excuse for gluttony and drunkenness. In Sanskrit literature this subjected race appears first as an ignoble enemy, then as evil spirits, after that as monkeys, and finally as slaves.

For all that, the reactive influence of the conquerors on the conquered is strongly marked. The worship of Siva and of demons was distinctly borrowed from the idolatry of the aborigines. The veneration of household and village deities, the simplest emblems of Nature,—oftentimes nothing more than a lump of clay placed under a tree,—is another comparatively harmless superstition derived from the same source. Still more injurious has been the existence of two distinct nationalities on the same soil, the one masters, the other bondsmen. In the absence of all motive for exertion, the Aryan population has retrograded in all that constitutes the vitality of a people, while the despised non-Aryan multitude, tempered in the furnace of toil and suffering, is now taking the lead even in education, and is fast supplanting its indolent, supercilious, and sensual oppressors.

In the hill country the aboriginal race has undergone but little change for many centuries. It still numbers from a million and a half to two millions of human beings, bound together by all the ties that make a common brotherhood. The Santal territory is, yet, no mere strip of land, but incloses an area equal to that of England and Wales. It measures 400 miles in length by 100 miles in breadth, and comprises 40,000 square miles. Of their forefathers they know nothing, beyond a tradition that they are descended from a single pair produced from two ducks' eggs laid upon the water-lily. The Creative Power, they affirm, was set in motion by the Great Mountain, who in the beginning stood alone in the midst of the waters. The rocks, being raised up by the prawns, were speedily covered with earth and grass, and the man and the woman multiplied so exceedingly that they were constrained to go forth and people the earth. It is therefore probable that the Santals originally came from the north-west, from the foot of the Himalayas, as did the Aryans in after times.

Their religion is one of terror. They worship only demons whose maleficence they strive, by various mysterious rites, to avert from their fields, their cattle, and their families. Each household has its own deity, whose name and attributes are kept so secret that the god of one brother is unknown to another. By the side of every village stands a grove of Sal-trees (*Shorea robusta*) deemed the "favourite resort of all the family gods of the little community." Above the family comes the tribe, each with its peculiar deity, to whom only male animals are sacrificed. The seven tribes, in their turn, are absorbed in the race, and the tribe god veils his face before the Great Mountain, the national god of

the Santals, who is worshipped with blood, and formerly with human sacrifices. He is, in fact, identical with the ancient Sanskrit Rudra, or the Siva of the mixed population of Lower Bengal.

Caste is unknown. All work, hunt, worship, and eat in common, but no man may marry a woman of his own clan, for more reasons than one an admirable prohibition. "The children belong to the father's clan, and the daughters, upon marriage, give up their ancient clan and its gods for those of their husbands." There are six great ceremonies in a Santal's life, for the description of which we must refer the reader to Mr. Hunter's luminous pages. The Santal, though partial to agriculture, is essentially a man of the woods and addicted to the chase, which he follows with equal courage and address. Of a cheerful and sociable disposition he is apt to indulge too freely in hospitality, and to sacrifice on a lengthened debauch the produce of a year's fitful industry. Honest, truthful, and simple-minded, he was long the victim of the wily Hindu, until oppression became unbearable, and the exodus was brought about of which a brief description was attempted at the commencement of this article.

From the foregoing remarks it may be judged how little, even now, we really know of our Indian fellow-subjects. We have hitherto been content to divide them into Mohamedans and Hindus, carefully classifying the latter into four castes. We have recognized, indeed, the difference of religion, but scarce a passing thought have we paid to the difference of race. The oversight, however, led in a great measure to the Santal insurrection, and underlies much of our indisputable unpopularity, in spite of our justice and active benevolence. Our fault has been that of a man who, in studying the times of Henry II., should regard the Normans, the Danes, and the Welsh as one and the same people. The Santals, in fact, may be compared to the ancient Britons, driven into the fastnesses of Devon, Cornwall, and Wales, preserving their vernacular tongue, living after the manner of their forefathers, and holding a religious faith in which it would be difficult to say whether Paganism or Christianity preponderated. Now that the attention of the British Government has been so forcibly directed to the peculiar customs and observances of the aboriginal races, it may be hoped that an exceptional system of administration will be provided for a people so deserving of special consideration.

Anarchy and Authority.

(CONCLUDED.)

WHEN once we have begun to recount the practical operations by which our Liberal friends work for the removal of definite evils, and in which if we do not join them they are apt to grow impatient with us, how can we pass over that very interesting operation of this kind—the attempt to enable a man to marry his deceased wife's sister? This operation, too, like that for abating the feudal customs of succession in land, I have had the advantage of myself seeing and hearing my Liberal friends labour at. I was lucky enough to be present when Mr. Chambers, I think, brought forward in the House of Commons his bill for enabling a man to marry his deceased wife's sister, and I heard the speech which Mr. Chambers then made in support of his bill. His first point was that God's law—the name he always gave to the Book of Leviticus—did not really forbid a man to marry his deceased wife's sister. God's law not forbidding it, the Liberal maxim that a man's prime right and happiness is to do as he likes ought at once to come into force, and to annul any such check upon the assertion of personal liberty as the prohibition to marry one's deceased wife's sister. A distinguished Liberal supporter of Mr. Chambers, in the debate which followed the introduction of the bill, produced a formula of much beauty and neatness for conveying in brief the Liberal notions on this head: "Liberty," said he, "is the law of human life." And, therefore, the moment it is ascertained that God's law, the Book of Leviticus, does not stop the way, man's law, the law of liberty, asserts its right, and makes us free to marry our deceased wife's sister.

And this exactly falls in with what Mr. Hepworth Dixon, who may almost be called the Colenso of love and marriage,—such a revolution does he make in our ideas on these matters, just as Dr. Colenso does in our ideas on religion,—tells us of the notions and proceedings of our kinsmen in America. With that affinity of genius to the Hebrew genius which we have already noticed, and with the strong belief of our race that liberty is the law of human life, so far as a fixed, perfect, and paramount rule of conscience, the Bible, does not expressly control it, our American kinsmen go again, Mr. Hepworth Dixon tells us, to their Bible, the Mormons to the patriarchs and the Old Testament, Brother Noyes to St. Paul and the New, and having never before read anything else but their Bible they now read their Bible over again and make all manner

of great discoveries there. All these discoveries are favourable to liberty, and in this way is satisfied that double craving so characteristic of the Philistine, and so eminently exemplified in that crowned Philistine, Henry VIII., the craving for forbidden fruit and the craving for legality. Mr. Hepworth Dixon's eloquent writings give currency, over here, to those important discoveries ; so that now, as regards love and marriage, we seem to be entering with all our sails spread, upon what Mr. Hepworth Dixon, its apostle and evangelist, calls a Gothic Revival, but what one of the many newspapers that so greatly admire Mr. Hepworth Dixon's lithe and sinewy style and form their own style upon it, calls, by a yet bolder and more striking figure, "a great sexual insurrection of our Anglo-Teutonic race." For this end we have to avert our eyes from everything Hellenic and fanciful, and to keep them steadily fixed upon the two cardinal points of the Bible and liberty. And one of those practical operations in which the Liberal party engage, and in which we are summoned to join them, directs itself entirely, as we have seen, to these cardinal points, and may almost be regarded, perhaps, as a kind of first instalment or public and Parliamentary pledge of the great sexual insurrection of our Anglo-Teutonic race.

But here, as elsewhere, what we seek is the Philistine's perfection, the development of his best self, not mere liberty for his ordinary self. And we no more allow absolute validity to his stock maxim, *Liberty is the law of human life*, than we allow it to the opposite maxim, which is just as true, *Renouncement is the law of human life*. For we know that the only perfect freedom is, as our religion says, a service ; not a service to any stock maxim, but an elevation of our best self, and a harmonising in subordination to this, and to the idea of a perfected humanity, all the multitudinous, turbulent, and blind impulses of our ordinary selves. Now, the Philistine's great defect being a defect in delicacy of perception, to cultivate in him this delicacy, to render it independent of external and mechanical rule, and a law to itself, is what seems to make most for his perfection, his true humanity. And his true humanity, and therefore his happiness, appears to lie much more, so far as the relations of love and marriage are concerned, in becoming alive to the finer shades of feeling which arise within these relations, in being able to enter with tact and sympathy into the subtle instinctive propensions and repugnances of the person with whose life his own life is bound up, to make them his own, to direct and govern, in harmony with them, the arbitrary range of his personal action, and thus to enlarge his spiritual and intellectual life and liberty, than in remaining insensible to these finer shades of feeling, this delicate sympathy, in giving unchecked range, so far as he can, to his mere personal action, in allowing no limits or government to this except such as a mechanical external law imposes, and in thus really narrowing, for the satisfaction of his ordinary self, his spiritual and intellectual life and liberty. Still more must this be so

when his fixed external rule, his God's law, is supplied to him from a source which is less fit, perhaps, to supply final and absolute instructions on this particular topic of love and marriage than on any other relation of human life. Bishop Wilson, who is full of examples of that fruitful Hellenising within the limits of Hebraism itself, of that renewing of the stiff and stark notions of Hebraism by turning upon them a stream of fresh thought and consciousness, which we have already noticed in St. Paul—Bishop Wilson gives an admirable lesson to rigid Hebraisers, like Mr. Chambers, asking themselves, Does God's law (that is, the Book of Leviticus) forbid us to marry our wife's sister? Does God's law (that is, again, the Book of Leviticus) allow us to marry our wife's sister? when he says: "Christian duties are founded on reason, not on the sovereign authority of God commanding what he pleases; God cannot command us what is not fit to be believed or done, all his commands being founded in the necessities of our nature." And, immense as is our debt to the Hebrew race and its genius, incomparable as is its authority on certain profoundly important sides of our human nature, worthy as it is to be described as having uttered, for those sides, the voice of the divine and eternal order of things, the law of God—who, that is not manacled and hood-winked by his Hebraism, can believe that, as to love and marriage, our reason and the necessities of our humanity have their true, sufficient, and divine law expressed for them by the voice of any Oriental and polygamous nation like the Hebrews? Who, I say, will believe, when he really considers the matter, that where the feminine nature, the feminine ideal, and our relations to them, are brought into question, the delicate and apprehensive genius of the Indo-European race, the race which invented the Muses, and chivalry, and the Madonna, is to find its last word on this question in the institutions of a Semitic people, whose wisest king had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines?

If here again, therefore, we seem to minister better to the diseased spirit of our time by leading it to think about the operation our Liberal friends have in hand, than by lending a hand to this operation ourselves, let us see, before we dismiss from our view the practical operations of our Liberal friends, whether the same thing does not hold good as to their celebrated industrial and economical labours also. Their great work of this kind is, of course, their free-trade policy. This policy, as having enabled the poor man to eat untaxed bread, and as having wonderfully augmented trade, we are accustomed to speak of with a kind of solemnity; it is chiefly on their lead in this policy that Mr. Bright founds for himself and his friends the claim, so often asserted by him, to be considered guides of the blind, teachers of the ignorant, benefactors slowly and laboriously developing in the Conservative party and in the country that which Mr. Bright is fond of calling *the growth of intelligence*—the object, as is well known, of all the friends of culture also, and the great end and aim of the culture that

we preach. Now, having first saluted free-trade and its doctors with all respect, let us see whether even here, too, our Liberal friends do not pursue their operations in a mechanical way, without reference to any firm intelligible law of things, to human life as a whole and human happiness ; and whether it is not more for our good, at this particular moment at any rate, instead of worshipping free-trade with them Hebraistically, as a kind of fetish, and helping them to pursue it as an end in and for itself, we turn the free stream of our thought upon their treatment of it, and see how this is related to the intelligible law of human life, and to national well-being and happiness. In short, suppose we Hellenise a little with free-trade, as we Hellenised with the Real Estate Intestacy Bill, and with the disestablishment of the Irish Church by the power of the Nonconformists' antipathy to religious establishments and endowments, and see whether what our reprovers beautifully call ministering to the diseased spirit of our time is best done by the Hellenising method of proceeding, or by the other.

But first let us understand how the policy of free-trade really shapes itself for our Liberal friends, and how they practically employ it as an instrument of national happiness and salvation. For as we said that it seemed clearly right to prevent the Church property of Ireland from being all taken for the benefit of the Church of a small minority, so it seems clearly right that the poor man should eat untaxed bread, and, generally, that restrictions and regulations which, for the supposed benefit of some particular person or class of persons, make the price of things artificially high here, or artificially low there, and interfere with the natural flow of trade and commerce, should be done away with. But in the policy of our Liberal friends free-trade means more than this, and is specially valued as a stimulant to the production of wealth, as they call it, and to the increase of the trade, business, and population of the country. We have already seen how these things—trade, business, and population—are mechanically pursued by us as ends precious in themselves, and are worshipped as what we call fetishes ; and Mr. Bright, I have already said, when he wishes to give the working-class a true sense of what makes glory and greatness, tells it to look at the cities it has built, the railroads it has made, the manufactures it has produced. So to this idea of glory and greatness the free-trade which our Liberal friends extol so solemnly and devoutly has served—to the increase of trade, business, and population ; and for this it is prized. Therefore, the untaxing of the poor man's bread has, with this view of national happiness, been used, not so much to make the existing poor man's bread cheaper or more abundant, but rather to create more poor men to eat it ; so that we cannot precisely say that we have fewer poor men than we had before free-trade, but we can say with truth that we have many more centres of industry, as they are called, and much more business, population, and manufactures. And if we are sometimes a little troubled by our multitude of poor men, yet we know

the increase of manufactures and population to be such a salutary thing in itself, and our free-trade policy creates such an admirable movement, creating fresh centres of industry and fresh poor men here, while we were thinking about our poor men there, that we are quite dazzled and borne away, and more and more industrial movement is called for, and our social progress seems to become one triumphant and enjoyable course of what is sometimes called, vulgarly, outrunning the constable.

If, however, taking some other criterion of man's well-being than the cities he has built and the manufactures he has produced, we persist in thinking that our social progress would be happier if there were not so many of us so very poor, and in busying ourselves with notions of in some way or other adjusting the poor man and business one to the other, and not multiplying the one and the other mechanically and blindly, then our Liberal friends, the appointed doctors of free-trade, take us up very sharply. "Art is long," says *The Times*, "and life is short; for the most part we settle things first and understand them afterwards. Let us have as few theories as possible; what is wanted is not the light of speculation. If nothing worked well of which the theory was not perfectly understood, we should be in sad confusion. The relations of labour and capital, we are told, are not understood, yet trade and commerce, on the whole, work satisfactorily." I quote from *The Times* of only a day or two ago. But thoughts like these, as I have often pointed out, are thoroughly British thoughts, and we have been familiar with them for years. We fix upon some object, which in this case is the production of wealth and the increase of manufactures, population, and commerce through free-trade, as a kind of one thing needful or end in itself, and then we pursue it staunchly and mechanically, and say that it is our duty to pursue it staunchly and mechanically, not to see how it is related to the whole intelligible law of things and to full human perfection, or to treat it as the piece of machinery, of varying value as its relations to the intelligible law of things vary, which it really is.

So it is of no use to say to *The Times*, and to our Liberal friends rejoicing in the possession of their talisman of free-trade, that about one in nineteen of our population is a pauper, and that, this being so, trade and commerce can hardly be said to prove by their satisfactory working that it matters nothing whether the relations between labour and capital are understood or not; nay, that we can hardly be said not to be in sad confusion. For here comes in our faith in the staunch mechanical pursuit of a fixed object, and covers itself with that imposing and colossal necessitarianism of *The Times* which we have before noticed. And this necessitarianism, taking for granted that an increase in trade and population is a good in itself, one of the chiefest of goods, tells us that disturbances of human happiness caused by ebbs and flows in the tide of trade business, which, on the whole, steadily mounts, are inevitable and not to be quarrelled with. This firm philosophy I seek to call to mind when I am

in the East of London, whither my avocations often lead me ; and, indeed, to fortify myself against the depressing sights which on these occasions assail us, I have transcribed from *The Times* one strain of this kind, full of the finest economical doctrine, and always carry it about with me. The passage is this :—

“ The East End is the most commercial, the most industrial, the most fluctuating region of the metropolis. It is always the first to suffer ; for it is the creature of prosperity, and falls to the ground the instant there is no wind to bear it up. The whole of that region is covered with huge docks, shipyards, manufactories, and a wilderness of small houses, all full of life and happiness in brisk times, but in dull times withered and lifeless, like the deserts we read of in the East. Now their brief spring is over. There is no one to blame for this ; it is the result of Nature's simplest laws ! ”

We must all agree that it is impossible that anything can be firmer than this, or show a surer faith in the working of free-trade, as our Liberal friends understand and employ it.

But if we still at all doubt whether the indefinite multiplication of manufactories and small houses can be such an absolute good in itself as to counterbalance the indefinite multiplication of poor people, we shall learn that this multiplication of poor people, too, is an absolute good in itself, and the result of divine and beautiful laws. This is indeed a favourite thesis with our Philistine friends, and I have already noticed the pride and gratitude with which they receive certain articles in *The Times*, dilating in thankful and solemn language on the majestic growth of our population. But I prefer to quote now, on this topic, the words of an ingenious young Scotch writer, Mr. Robert Buchanan, because he invests with so much imagination and poetry this current idea of the blessed and even divine character which the multiplying of population is supposed in itself to have. “ We move to multiplicity,” says Mr. Robert Buchanan. “ If there is one quality which seems God's, and His exclusively, it seems that divine philoprogenitiveness, that passionate love of distribution and expansion into living forms. Every animal added seems a new ecstasy to the Maker ; every life added, a new embodiment of His love. He would swarm the earth with beings. There are never enough. Life, life, life,—faces gleaming, hearts beating, must fill every cranny. Not a corner is suffered to remain empty. The whole earth breeds, and God glories.”

It is a little unjust, perhaps, to attribute to the Divinity exclusively this philoprogenitiveness, which the British Philistine and the poorer class of Irish may certainly claim to share with him ; yet how inspiring is here the whole strain of thought ! and the beautiful words, too, I carry about with me in the East of London, and often read them there. They are quite in agreement with the popular language one is accustomed to hear about children and large families, which describes children as *sent*.

And a line of poetry which Mr. Robert Buchanan throws in presently after the poetical prose I have quoted—

'Tis the old story of the fig-leaf time—

this fine line, too, naturally connects itself, when one is in the East of London, with the idea of God's desire to *swarm* the earth with beings, because the swarming of the earth with beings does indeed, in the East of London, so seem to revive—

. . . the old story of the fig-leaf time—

such a number of the people one meets there having hardly a rag to cover them ; and the more the swarming goes on, the more it promises to revive this old story. And when the story is perfectly revived, the swarming quite completed, and every cranny choke-full, then, too, no doubt, the faces in the East of London will be gleaming faces, which Mr. Robert Buchanan says it is God's desire they should be, and which every one must perceive they are not at present, but, on the contrary, very miserable.

But to prevent all this philosophy and poetry from quite running away with us, and making us think with *The Times*, and our Liberal free-trading friends, and the British Philistines generally, that the increase of small houses and manufactories, or the increase of population, are absolute goods in themselves, to be mechanically pursued, and to be worshipped like fetishes—to prevent this, we have got that notion of ours immovably fixed, of which I have long ago spoken, that culture or the study of perfection leads us to conceive of no perfection as real which is not a general perfection, embracing all our fellow-men with whom we have to do. Such is the sympathy which binds humanity together, that we are indeed, as our religion says, members of one body, and if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; individual perfection is impossible so long as the rest of mankind are not perfected along with us. "The *multitude* of the wise is the welfare of the world," says the wise man. And to this effect that excellent and often quoted guide of ours, Bishop Wilson, has some striking words :—"It is not," says he, "so much our neighbour's interest as our own that we love him." And again he says : "Our salvation does in some measure depend upon that of others." And the author of the *Imitation* puts the same thing admirably when he says :—" *Obscurior etiam via ad cælum videbatur quando tam pauci regnum cælorum quærere curabant*—the fewer there are who follow the way to perfection, the harder that way is to find." So all our fellow-men, in the East of London and elsewhere, we must take along with us in the progress towards perfection, if we ourselves really, as we profess, want to be perfect ; and we must not let the worship of any fetish, any machinery, such as manufactures or population, which are not, like perfection, absolute goods in themselves though we think them so, create for us such a multitude of miserable, sunken, and ignorant human beings that to carry them all along with us

is impossible, and perforce they must for the most part be left by us in their degradation and wretchedness. But evidently the conception of free-trade, on which our Liberal friends vaunt themselves, and in which they think they have found the secret of national prosperity—evidently, I say, the more unfettered pursuit of the production of wealth, and the mere mechanical multiplying, for this end, of manufactures and population, threatens to create for us, if it has not created already, those vast, miserable, unmanageable masses of sunken people—one pauper, at the present moment, for every nineteen of us—to the existence of which we are, as we have seen, absolutely forbidden to reconcile ourselves, in spite of all that the philosophy of *The Times* and the poetry of Mr. Robert Buchanan may say to persuade us.

And though Hebraism, following its best and highest instinct, identical, as we have seen, with that of Hellenism in its final aim, the aim of perfection, teaches us this very clearly; and though from Hebraising counsellors—the Bible, Bishop Wilson, the author of the *Imitation*—I have preferred (as well I may, for from this rock of Hebraism we are all hewn!) to draw the texts which we use to bring home to our minds this teaching; yet Hebraism seems powerless, almost as powerless as our free-trading Liberal friends, to deal efficaciously with our ever-accumulating masses of pauperism, and to prevent their accumulating still more. Hebraism builds churches, indeed, for these masses, and sends missionaries among them; above all, it sets itself against the social necessitarianism of *The Times*, and refuses to accept their degradation as inevitable; but with regard to their ever-increasing accumulation, it seems to be led to the very same conclusions, though from a point of view of its own, as our free-trading Liberal friends. Hebraism, with that mechanical and misleading use of the letter of Scripture on which we have already commented, is governed by such texts as, *Be fruitful and multiply*, the edict of God's law, as Mr. Chambers would say; or by the declaration of what he would call God's word in the Psalms, that the man who has a great number of children is thereby made happy. Thus Hebraism is conducted to nearly the same notion as the popular mind and as Mr. Robert Buchanan, that children are *sent* and that the divine nature takes a delight in swarming the East End of London with paupers; only, when they are perishing in their helplessness and wretchedness it asserts the Christian duty of succouring them, instead of saying, like *The Times*: "Now their brief spring is over; there is nobody to blame for this; it is the result of Nature's simplest laws!" But, like *The Times*, Hebraism despairs of any help from knowledge, and says that "what is wanted is not the light of speculation." I remember that the other day a good man, looking with me upon a multitude of children who were gathered before us in one of the most miserable regions of London—children eaten up with disease, half-sized, half-fed, half-clothed, neglected by their parents, without health, without home, without hope, said to me: "The

one thing really needful is to teach these little ones to succour one another, if only with a cup of cold water ; but now, from one end of the country to the other, one hears nothing but the cry for knowledge, knowledge, knowledge ! " And yet surely, so long as these children are there in these festering masses, without health, without home, without hope, and so long as their multitude is perpetually swelling, charged with misery they must still be for themselves, charged with misery they must still be for us, whether they help one another with a cup of cold water or no ! and the knowledge how to prevent their accumulating is necessary, even to give their moral life and growth a fair chance.

May we not, therefore, say, that neither the true Hebraism of this good man, willing to spend and be spent for these sunken multitudes, nor what I may call the spurious Hebraism of our free-trading Liberal friends, mechanically worshipping their fetish of the production of wealth and of the increase of manufactures and population, and looking neither to the right or left so long as this increase goes on, avail us much here ; and that here again what we want is Hellenism, the letting our consciousness play freely and simply upon the facts before us, and listening to what it tells us of the intelligible law of things as concerns them ? And surely what it tells us is, that a man's children are not really *sent*, any more than the pictures upon his wall, or the horses in his stable are *sent* ; and that to bring people into the world, when one cannot afford to keep them and oneself decently and not too precariously, or to bring more of them into the world than one can afford to keep thus, is, whatever *The Times* and Mr. Robert Buchanan may say, by no means an accomplishment of the Divine will or a fulfilment of Nature's simplest laws, but is just as wrong, just as contrary to reason and the will of God, as for a man to have horses, or carriages, or pictures, when he cannot afford them, or to have more of them than he can afford ; and that, in the one case as in the other, the greater the scale on which the violation of reason's laws is practised, and the longer it is persisted in, the greater must be the confusion and final trouble. Surely no laudations of free-trade, no meetings of bishops and clergy in the East End of London, no reading of papers and reports, can tell us anything about our social condition which it more concerns us to know than that ! and not only to know, but habitually to have the knowledge present, and to act upon it as one acts upon the knowledge that water wets and fire burns ! And not only the sunken populace of our great cities are concerned to know it, and the pauper twentieth of our population ; we Philistines of the middle class, too, are concerned to know it, and all who have to set themselves to make progress in perfection ! But we all know it already ! some one will say ; it is the simplest law of prudence. But how little reality must there be in our knowledge of it ; how little can we put it in practice ; how little is it likely to penetrate among the poor and struggling masses of our population, and to better our condition, so long as an unin-

telligent Hebraism of one sort keeps repenting as an absolute eternal word of God the psalm-verse which says that the man who has a great many children is happy ; or an unintelligent Hebraism of another sort keeps assigning as an absolute proof of national prosperity the multiplying of manufactures and population. Surely, the one set of Hebraisers have to learn that their psalm-verse was composed at the resettlement of Jerusalem after the Captivity, when the Jews of Jerusalem were a handful, an undermanned garrison, and every child was a blessing, and that the word of God, or the voice of the Divine order of things, declares the possession of a great many children to be a blessing only when it really is so. And the other set of Hebraisers, have they not to learn that if they call their private acquaintances imprudent and unlucky when, with no means of support for them or with precarious means, they have a large family of children, then they ought not to call the State well managed and prosperous merely because its manufactures and its citizens multiply, if the manufactures, which bring new citizens into existence just as much as if they had actually begotten them, bring more of them into existence than they can maintain, or are too precarious to go on maintaining those whom for a while they maintained ? Hellenism, surely, or the habit of fixing our mind upon the intelligible law of things, is most salutary if it makes us see that the only absolute good, the only absolute and eternal object prescribed to us by God's law, or the Divine order of things, is the progress towards perfection, our own progress towards it and the progress of humanity ; and that for every individual man and every society of men the possession and multiplication of children, like the possession and multiplication of horses and pictures, is to be accounted good or bad, not in itself, but with reference to this object and the progress towards it. And as no man is to be excused in having horses or pictures, if his having them hinders his own or others' progress towards perfection and makes them lead a servile and ignoble life, so is no man to be excused for having children if his having them makes him or others lead this. Plain thoughts of this kind are surely the spontaneous product of our consciousness when allowed to play freely and disinterestedly upon the actual facts of our social condition and upon our stock notions and stock habits concerning it ; and firmly grasped and simply uttered they are more likely, one cannot but think, to better that condition and to diminish our formidable rate of one pauper to every nineteen of us than is the Hebraising and mechanical pursuit of free-trade by our Liberal friends.

So that, here as elsewhere, the practical operations of our Liberal friends by which they set so much store and in which they invite us to join them and to show what Mr. Bright calls a commendable interest, do not seem to us so practical for real good as they think ; and our Liberal friends seem to us themselves to need to Hellenise, as we say, a little, that is, to examine into the nature of real good, and to listen to what their conscious-

ness tells them about it, rather than to pursue with such heat and confidence their present practical operations. At any rate, we ourselves must put up with their impatience and with their reproaches of cultivated inaction, and still decline to lend a hand to their practical operations, until we, for our own part at least, have grown a little clearer about the nature of real good, and have arrived nearer to a condition of mind out of which really fruitful and solid operations may spring.

In the meanwhile, since our Liberal friends keep loudly and resolutely assuring us that their actual operations at present are fruitful and solid, let us in each case keep testing these operations in the simple way we have indicated, by letting the natural stream of our consciousness flow over them freely; and if they stand this test successfully, then let us give them our commendable interest, but not else. For example, our Liberal friends assure us at the very top of their voices that their present actual operation for the disestablishment of the Irish Church is fruitful and solid. But what if, on testing it, the truth appears to be that the statesmen and reasonable people of both parties wished for much the same thing—the fair apportionment of the church property of Ireland among the principal religious bodies there—but that behind the statesmen and reasonable people there was, on one side, a mass of Tory prejudice, and on the other, a mass of Nonconformist prejudice, to which such an arrangement was unpalatable? that the natural way would have been for the statesmen and reasonable people of both sides to have united, and to have allayed and dissipated, so far as they could, the resistance of their respective extremes, and where they could not, have confronted it in concert; but that, instead of this, Liberal statesmen waited to trip up their rivals, if they proposed the arrangement which both knew to be reasonable, by means of the prejudice of their own Nonconformist extreme; and then, themselves proposing an arrangement to flatter this prejudice, made the arrangement, which they themselves knew to be reasonable, out of the question, and drove their rivals in their turn to blow up with all their might, in the hope of baffling them, a great fire among their own Tory extreme of fierce prejudice and religious bigotry, a fire which once kindled may always very easily spread further? If, I say, on testing the present operation of our Liberal friends for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the truth about it appears to be very much this, then, I think, even on the eve of an election, and with our Liberal friends making impassioned appeals to us to take a commendable interest in their operation and them, and to rally round what Sir Henry Hoare (who may be described, perhaps, as a Barbarian converted to Philistinism, as I, on the other hand, seem to be a Philistine converted to culture) finely calls the conscientiousness of a Gladstone and the intellect of a Bright, it is rather our duty to abstain, and, instead of lending a hand to the operation of our Liberal friends, to do what we can to abate and dissolve the mass of prejudice, Tory or Nonconformist, which makes so doubtfully

begotten and equivocal an operation as the present, producible and possible.

Thus resolutely refusing to lend a hand to the imperfect operations of our Liberal friends, disregarding their impatience, taunts, and reproaches, firmly bent on trying to find in the intelligible law of things a firmer and sounder basis for future practice than any which we have at present, and believing this search and discovery to be, for our generation and circumstances, of yet more vital and pressing importance than practice itself, we nevertheless may do more, perhaps, we poor disparaged followers of culture, to make, amidst the stormy agitations and confusions which seem threatening and thickening around us, the actual present, and the frame of society in which we live, solid and seaworthy, than all which our bustling politicians can do. For we have seen how much of these agitations is due to the disbelief, among the classes and combinations of men, Barbarian or Philistine, which have hitherto governed our society, in right reason, in a paramount best self; to the inevitable decay and break-up of the organisations by which, asserting and expressing in these organisations their ordinary self only, they long ruled us; and to their irresolution, when the society which their conscience tells them they have made and manage not with right reason but with their ordinary self, is rudely shaken, in offering resistance to its subverters. But for us, who believe in right reason, in the duty and possibility of extricating and elevating our best self, in the progress of humanity towards perfection, for us the framework of society, that theatre on which this august drama has to unroll itself, is sacred; and whoever administers it, and however we may seek to remove them from the tenure of administration, yet, while they administer society, we steadily, and with undivided heart, support them in repressing anarchy and disorder; because without order there can be no society, and without society there can be no human perfection.

With me, indeed, this rule of conduct is hereditary. I remember my father, in one of his unpublished letters, written more than forty years ago, when the political and social state of the country was gloomy and troubled and there were riots in many places, goes on, after strongly insisting on the badness and foolishness of the government, and on the harm and dangerousness of our feudal and aristocratical constitution of society, and ends thus: "As for rioting, the old Roman way of dealing with that is always the right one; flog the rank and file, and fling the ringleaders from the Tarpeian Rock!" And this opinion we can never forsake, however our Liberal friends may think a little rioting, and what they call popular demonstrations, useful sometimes to their own interests and to the interests of the valuable practical operations they have in hand, and may preach the right of an Englishman to be left to do as far as possible what he likes, and the duty of his government to indulge him and connive as much as possible, and to abstain from all harshness of repression. And

even when they artfully show us operations which are undoubtedly precious, such as the abolition of the slave-trade, and ask us if, for their sake, foolish and obstinate governments may not wholesomely be frightened by a little disturbance, the good design in view and the difficulty of overcoming opposition to it being considered—still we say no, and that monster processions in the streets and forcible irruptions into the parks, even in professed support of this good design, ought to be unflinchingly forbidden and repressed, and that far more is lost than is gained by permitting them. Because a state in which law is authoritative and sovereign, a firm and settled course of public order, is requisite if man is to bring to maturity anything precious and lasting now, and to found anything precious and lasting for the future.

Thus in our eyes the very frame-work and exterior order of the State, whoever may administer the State, is sacred; and culture is the most resolute enemy of anarchy, because of the great hopes and designs for the State which culture teaches us to nourish. But as, believing in right reason and having faith in the progress of humanity towards perfection, and ever labouring for this end, we grow to have clearer sight of the ideas of right reason, and of the elements and helps of perfection, and come gradually to fill the framework of the State with them, to fashion its internal composition and all its laws and institutions conformably to them, and to make the State more and more the expression, as we say, of our best self, which is not manifold and vulgar and unstable and contentious and ever-varying, but one and noble and secure and peaceful and the same for all mankind—with what aversion shall we not *then* regard anarchy, with what firmness shall we not check it, when there is so much that is so precious which it will endanger? So that, for the sake of the present, but far more for the sake of the future, the lovers of culture are unswervingly and with a good conscience the opposers of anarchy. And not as the Barbarians and Philistines, whose honesty and whose sense of humour makes them shrink, as we have seen, from treating the State as too serious a thing and from giving it too much power—for indeed the only State they know of and think they administer is the expression of their ordinary self, and though the headstrong and violent extreme among them might gladly arm this with full authority, yet their virtuous mean is, as we have said, pricked in conscience at doing this, and so our Barbarian governors let the Park palings be broken down, and our Philistine alderman-colonels let the London roughs reb and beat the by-standers. But we, beholding in the State no expression of our ordinary self, but even already, as it were, the appointed frame and prepared vessel of our best self, and, for the future, our best self's powerful, beneficent, and sacred expression and organ, we are willing and resolved, even now, to strengthen against anarchy the trembling hands of our Barbarian governors and the feeble knees of our Philistine alderman-colonels, and to tell them that it is not really in behalf of their own ordinary self that they

are called to protect the Park palings, and to suppress the London roughs, but in behalf of the best self both of themselves and of all of us in the future.

Nevertheless, though for resisting anarchy the lovers of culture may prize and employ fire and strength, yet they must, at the same time, bear constantly in mind that it is not at this moment true, what the majority of people tell us, that the world wants fire and strength more than sweetness and light, and that things are for the most part to be settled first and understood afterwards. We have seen how much of our present difficulties and confusion this untrue notion of the majority of people amongst us has caused and tends to perpetuate; and the true business of the friends of culture now is, to dissipate this false notion, to spread the belief in right reason and in a firm intelligible law of things, and to get men to allow their thought and consciousness to play on their stock notions and habits disinterestedly and freely, and try, in preference to staunchly acting with imperfect knowledge, to obtain some sounder basis of knowledge on which to act. This is what the friends and lovers of culture have to do, however the believers in action may grow impatient with us, and may insist on our lending a hand to their practical operations and showing a commendable interest in them.

To this insistence we must indeed turn a deaf ear; but neither, on the other hand, must the friends of culture expect to take the believers in action by storm, or to be visibly and speedily important, and to rule and cut a figure in the world. Aristotle says that those for whom ideas and the pursuit of the intelligible law of things can have much attraction, are principally the young, filled with generous spirit and with a passion for perfection; but the mass of mankind, he says, follow seeming goods for real, bestowing hardly a thought upon true sweetness and light—"and to their lives," he adds mournfully, "who can give another and a better rhythm?" But although those chiefly attracted by sweetness and light will probably always be the young and enthusiastic, and culture must not hope to take the mass of mankind by storm, yet we will not therefore, for our own day and our own people, admit the desponding sentence of Aristotle. For is not this the right crown of the long discipline of Hebraism, and the due fruit of mankind's centuries of painful schooling in self-conquest, and the just reward, above all, of the strenuous energy of our own nation and kindred in dealing honestly with itself and walking steadfastly according to the best light it knows, that when in the fulness of time it has reason and beauty offered to it, and the law of things as they really are, it should at last walk by this true light with the same staunchness and zeal with which it formerly walked by its imperfect light, and thus man's two great natural forces, Hebraism and Hellenism, should no longer be dissociated and rival, but should be a joint force of right thinking and strong doing to carry him on.

towards perfection? This is what the lovers of culture may perhaps dare to augur for such a nation as ours. Therefore, however great the changes to be accomplished, and however dense the array of Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace, we will neither despair on the one hand, nor on the other threaten violent revolution and change; but we will look forward cheerfully and hopefully to "a revolution," as the Duke of Wellington said, "by due course of law," though not exactly such laws as our Liberal friends are now, with their actual lights, fond of offering us.

But if despondency and violence are both of them forbidden to the believer in culture, yet neither, on the other hand, is public life and direct political action permitted to him. For it is his business, as we have seen, to get the present believers in action, and lovers of political talking and doing, to make a return upon their own minds, scrutinise their stock notions and habits much more, value their present talking and doing much less, in order that by learning to think more clearly they may come at last to act less confusedly. But how shall we persuade the Barbarian to hold lightly to his feudal usages; how shall we persuade the Nonconformist that his time spent in agitating for the abolition of church-rates would have been better spent in getting worthier ideas than churchmen have of God and the ordering of the world, or his time spent in battling for voluntarism in education better spent in learning to value and found a public and national culture; how shall we persuade, finally, our alderman-colonel not to be content with sitting in the hall of judgment or marching at the head of his men of war, without some knowledge how to perform judgment and how to direct men of war—how, I say, shall we persuade all these of this, if our alderman-colonel sees that we want to get his leading-staff and his scales of justice for our own hands; or the Nonconformist, that we want for ourselves his platform; or the Barbarian, that we want for ourselves his pre-eminence and function? Certainly they will be less slow to believe, as we want them to believe, that the intelligible law of things has in itself something desirable and precious, and that place, function, and bustle are hollow goods without it, if they see that we can content ourselves with it and find in it our satisfaction, not making it an instrument to give us place, function and bustle.

And though Mr. Sedgwick says that social usefulness really means "losing oneself in a mass of disagreeable, hard, mechanical details," and though all the believers in action are fond of asserting the same thing, yet, as to lose ourselves is not what we want, but to find the intelligible law of things, this assertion too we shall not blindly accept, but shall sift and try it a little first. And if we see that because the believers in action, forgetting Goethe's maxim, "to act is easy, to think is hard," imagine there is some wonderful virtue in losing oneself in a mass of mechanical details, therefore they excuse themselves from much thought about the clear ideas which ought to govern these details, we shall give our chief care and pains to seeking out those ideas and to setting them

forth, being persuaded that if we have the ideas firm and clear, the mechanical details for their execution will come a great deal more simply and easily than we now suppose. And even in education, where our Liberal friends are now, with much zeal, bringing out their train of practical operations and inviting all men to lend them a hand, and where, since education is the road to culture, we might gladly lend them a hand with their practical operations if we could lend them one anywhere, yet, if we see that a foreign law for education rests on very clear ideas about the citizen's claim, in this matter, upon the State, and the State's duty towards the citizen, but has its mechanical details comparatively few and simple, while an English law for the same concern is ruled by no clear ideas about the citizen's claim and the State's duty, but has, in compensation, a mass of minute mechanical details about the number of members on a school-committee, and how many shall be a quorum, and how they shall be summoned, and how often they shall meet. Then we must conclude that our nation stands in more need of clear ideas on the main matter than of laboured details about the accessories of the matter, and that we do more service by trying to help it to the ideas than by lending it a hand with the details. So while Mr. Samuel Morley and his friends talk of changing their policy on education, not for the sake of modelling it on more sound ideas, but "for fear the management of education should be taken out of their hands," we shall not much care for taking the management out of their hands and getting it into ours, but rather we shall try and make them perceive that to model education on sound ideas is of more importance than to have the management of it in one's own hands ever so fully.

At this exciting juncture, then, while so many of the lovers of new ideas, somewhat weary, as we too are of the stock performances of our Liberal friends upon the political stage, are disposed to rush valiantly upon this public stage themselves, we cannot at all think that for a sage lover of new ideas this stage is the right one. Plenty of people there will be without us—country gentlemen in search of a club, demagogues in search of a tub, lawyers in search of a place, industrialists in search of gentility—who will come from the east and from the west, and will sit down at that Thyrcean banquet of clap-trap, which English public life for these many years past has been. So long as those old organisations of which we have seen the insufficiency, those expressions of our ordinary self—Barbarian or Philistine—have force anywhere, they will have force in Parliament; where the man whom the Barbarians send cannot but be impelled to please the Barbarians' ordinary self, and their natural taste for the bathos; and the man whom the Philistines send cannot but be impelled to please those of the Philistines. Conservatism will and must long mean this, that the Barbarians should keep their heritage; and Liberalism, that the Barbarians should pass away, as they will pass away, and that into their heritage the Philistines should enter. This seems,

indeed, to be the true and authentic promise of which our Liberal friends and Mr. Bright are the heirs, and the goal of all that great man's labours. Presently, perhaps, Mr. Odger and Mr. Bradlaugh will be there with their mission to oust both Barbarians and Philistines, and to get the heritage for the Populace. We, on the other hand, are for giving the heritage neither to the Barbarians nor to the Philistines, nor yet to the Populace ; but we are for the transformation of all of these, according to the law of perfection. Through the length and breadth of our nation a sense—vague and obscure as yet—of weariness with the old organisations, of desire for this transformation, works and grows ; in the House of Commons the old organisations must inevitably be most enduring and strongest, and it may truly be averred, therefore, that at present the centre of movement is not in the House of Commons. It is in the fermenting mind of the nation ; and his is for the next twenty years the real influence who can address himself to this.

Pericles was perhaps the most perfect public speaker who ever lived, for he was the man who most perfectly combined thought and wisdom with feeling and eloquence. Yet Alcibiades declares that men went away from the oratory of Pericles, saying it was very fine, it was very good, and afterwards thinking no more about it ; but they went away from hearing Socrates talk, with the point of what he had said sticking fast in their minds, and they could not get rid of it. Socrates is poisoned and dead ; but in his own breast every man carries about with him a possible Socrates, in that power of a disinterested play of consciousness upon his stock notions and habits of which this wise and admirable man gave all through his lifetime the great example, and which was the secret of his incomparable influence. And he who leads men to call forth and exercise in themselves this power, and who busily calls it forth and exercises it in himself, is at the present moment, perhaps, as Socrates was in his time, more in concert with the vital working of men's minds, and more effectually significant, than any House of Commons' orator or practical operator in politics.

Every one is now boasting of what he has done to educate men's minds and to give things the course they are taking ; Mr. Disraeli educates, Mr. Bright educates, Mr. Beales educates. We indeed pretend to educate no one, for we are still engaged in trying to clear and educate ourselves ; but we are sure that the endeavour to reach, through culture, the firm intelligible law of things, that the detaching ourselves from our stock notions and habits, that a more free play of consciousness, a desire for sweetness and light, and all the bent which we call Hellenising, is the master-impulse now of the life of our nation and of humanity, somewhat obscurely perhaps for this moment, but decisively for the immediate future ; and that those who work for this are the sovereign educators. Docile echoes of the eternal voice, pliant organs of the infinite will, they are going along with the essential movement of the world ; and this is

their strength, and their happy and divine fortune. For if the believers in action, who are so impatient with us and call us effeminate, had had the same fortune, they would have surpassed us in this sphere of vital influence by all the superiority of their genius and energy over ours; but now we go the way the world is going, while they abolish the Irish Church by the power of the Nonconformists' antipathy to establishments, or they enable a man to marry his deceased wife's sister.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



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The Brambleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER LXI.

LADY CULDUFF'S LETTER.



A LONG letter, a letter of several pages, from Marion reached the villa; and though it is not my intention to ask the reader to listen to it textually or throughout, I crave permission to give certain parts of its contents.

As Lady Culduff prospered in the world, she became what she thought "devout," and perpetually reminded all around her that she was well aware she was living in a very sinful world, and keeping daily company with transgressors; and she actually brought herself to believe that by a repeated reference to the wickedness of this life, she was entering a formal protest against

sin, and qualifying herself, at this very cheap price, for something much better hereafter.

She was—and it was a pet phrase with her—"resigned" to everything: resigned to Lord Culduff's being made a grand cross and an ambassador, with the reasonable prospect of an earldom; resigned to her own great part—and was it not a great part?—in this advancement; resigned to be an ambassadress! That she was resigned to the ruin and downfall

of her family, especially if they should have the delicacy and good taste to hide themselves somewhere, and not obtrude that ruin and downfall on the world, was plainly manifest; and when she averred that, come what might, we ought to be ever assured that all things were for the best, she meant in reality to say it was a wise dispensation that sent herself to live in a palace at Pera, and left her brothers and sisters to shiver out existence in barbarism.

There was not a shadow of hypocrisy in all this. She believed every word she said upon it. She accepted the downfall of her family as her share of those ills which are the common lot of humanity; and she was very proud of the fortitude that sustained her under this heavy trial, and of that resignation that enabled her not to grieve over these things in an unseemly fashion, or in any way that might tell on her complexion.

"After that splendid success of Culduff's at Naples," wrote she, "of which the newspapers are full, I need not remind you that we ought to have had Paris, and, indeed, must have had it, but the Ministry made it a direct and personal favour of Culduff that he would go and set that troublesome Eastern question to rights. As you know nothing of politics, dear Nelly, and, indeed, are far happier in that ignorance, I shall not enter upon what, even with the fullest explanation, would only bewilder you. Enough if you know that we have to out-manceuvre the Russians, baffle the French, and bully the Greeks; and that there is not for the task Culduff's equal in England. I think I see your astonishment that I should talk of such themes: they were not certainly the sort of subjects which once occupied our thoughts; but, my dear Nelly, in linking your fate to that of a man of high ambition, you accept the companionship of his intellect, instead of a share in his heart. And, as you well know I always repudiated the curate and cottage theory, I accept the alternative without repining. Can I teach you any of this philosophy, Nelly, and will it lighten the load of your own sorrows to learn how I have come to bear mine? It is in the worldliness of people generally lies their chief unhappiness. They will not, as Culduff says, 'accept the situation.' Now we have accepted it, we submit to it, and, in consequence, suffer fewer heartburnings and repinings than our neighbours. Dear Augustus never had any costly tastes; and as for yourself, simplicity was your badge in everything. Temple is indeed to be pitied, for Temple, with money to back him, might have made a respectable figure in the world and married well; but Temple a poor man, must fall down to a second-class legation, and look over the Minister's larder. Culduff tried, but failed to make something of him. As C. told him one day, you have only to see Charles Mathews act, to be convinced that to be a coxcomb, a man must be consummately clever; and yet it is exactly the 'role' every empty fellow fancies would suit him. T. resented this, well meant as it was, and resigned his secretaryship. He has gone over to England, but I do not imagine with much prospect of re-employment.

"Do not think, my dear Nelly, of quitting your present refuge. You are safe now, and in harbour, and be slow to adventure on that wild

ocean of life where shipwrecks are occurring on every hand. So long as one is obscure, poverty has no terrors. As Culduff says, you may always wear a ragged coat in the dark. It is we, who unfortunately must walk in the noonday, cannot be seen unless in fine raiment. Do not mistake me, however. I say this without complaint; I repine at nothing.

"I had written so much of my letter, dear Nelly, intending to finish it at Rome; but Culduff is obliged to hurry on to Ischl, where some great diplomatic gathering is now assembled, and I must omit a number of things I desire to say to you.

"Culduff thinks we must call on Lady Augusta as we go through. I own I have done my best to avoid this, and if I must go, it will not be in the best of tempers. The oddest thing of all is, C. dislikes her fully as much as I do; but there is some wonderful freemasonry among these people that obliges them, like the members of a secret society, to certain 'égards' towards each other; and I am satisfied he would rather do a positive wrong to some one in middle-class life than be wanting in some punctilio or attention to a person of her condition. I have often been much provoked by displays of this sentiment, needlessly paraded to offend my own sense of propriety. I shall add a line after my visit.

"Rome.

"I have news for you. M. Pracontal—if this be his name—not only takes your estates, but your stepmother. The odious woman had the effrontery to tell us so to our faces. How I bore it, what I said; or felt or suffered, I know not. Some sort of fit, I believe, seized me, for Culduff sent for a physician when I got back to the hotel, and our departure was deferred.

"The outrage of this conduct has so shaken my nerves that I can scarcely write, nor is my sense of indignation lessened by the levity with which it pleases Culduff to treat the whole matter. 'It is a bold coup—a less courageous woman would have recoiled from it—she is very daring.' This is what he says of her. She has the courage that says to the world, 'I am ready to meet all your censures and your reproaches;' but I never heard this called heroism before. Must I own to you, Nelly, that what overwhelms me most in this disgraceful event is the confidence it evinces in this man's cause. 'You may swear,' said Culduff, 'that she is backing the winner. Women are timid gamblers, and never risk their money without almost every chance in their favour.' I know that my lord plumes himself on knowing a great deal about us, prompting him at times to utter much that is less than complimentary; but I give you this opinion of his here for what it is worth, frankly owning that my dislike to the woman is such I can be no fair judge of any case into which she enters.

"Pracontal—I only saw him for an instant—struck me as a third-class Frenchman, something between a 'sous-officier' of cavalry and a *commissaire-voyageur*; not ill-looking, and set up with that air of the soldier that in France does duty for dignity. He had a few hasty words with Culduff, but did not persist nor show any desire to make a row in presence

of ladies. So far, his instincts as a corporal guided him safely. Had he been led by the commis-voyageur side of his character, we should have had a most disgraceful scene, ending by a hostile meeting between a British peer and a bagman.

"My nerves have been so shaken by this incident, and my recollection is still so charged with this odious woman's look, voice, and manner, that I cannot trust myself to say more. Be assured, dear Nelly, that in all the miserable details of this great calamity to our family, no one event has occurred equal in poignant suffering to the insult I have thus been subjected to."

"Culduff will not agree to it, but I declare to you she was positively vulgar in the smirking complacency in which she presented the man as her future husband. She was already *passée* when she married my father, and the exuberant joy at this proposal revealed the old maid's nature. C., of course, calls her charming, a woman of very attractive qualities, and such like; but men of a certain age have ideas of their own on these subjects, and, like their notions on cookery, make no converts among people under forty. I believe I told him so, and, in consequence, the whole theme has been strictly avoided by each of us ever since."

The remainder of the letter was devoted to details as to her future life at Constantinople, and the onerous duties that would devolve on her as ambassadress. She hinted also to a time when she would ask dear Nelly to come and visit her; but, of course, until matters were fully settled and concluded, she could not expect her to leave dear Gusty.

The postscript ran thus:—"Culduff meant to have given some small Church promotion to young L'Estrange, and, indeed, believed he had done so; but some difficulty has arisen. It is either not his turn, or the Bishop is troublesome, or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners—if there be such people—are making objections. If he—I mean L'Estrange—be still disengaged, would it be wise to offer him the chaplaincy to the embassy? I mean wise as regards ourselves; for I take it the sister may be still unmarried, and, if she be like what I remember her, a person not easily suppressed, nor at all indisposed to assume airs of perfect equality, even with those separated from her by a whole hemisphere of station. Give me your candid advice on this point, not thinking of *them*, but of *me*, for, though I feel Julia—is not that her name?—would be insupportable, the parson himself would be very useful, and I think a comfort to me.

"Of course you will not consult any one upon this matter. It is your own personal opinion I want, and you will give it to me, knowing me and my prejudices—I suppose I had better call them—and not thinking of your own leanings and likings for the girl. She may, for aught I know, have changed. Culduff has some wise saw about acid wines growing dry by age; I don't know whether young ladies mellow in this fashion, but Julia was certainly tart enough once to have tested the theory, and might be the '*Amonillado*' of old maids by this time."

It may be imagined that after a sally of this kind it was not easy for

the writer to recover that semi-moralizing vein in which the letter opened. Nor did she. The conclusion was abrupt, and merely directed Nelly to address her next to the Summer Palace at Therapia; "for those horrid people, our predecessors, have left the embassy-house in such a condition it will take weeks and several thousand pounds to make it habitable. There must be a vote taken 'in supply' on this. I am writing Greek to you, poor child; but I mean they must give us money, and, of course, the discussion will expose us to many impertinences. One writer declared that he never knew of a debate on the estimates without an allusion to Lord Culduff's wig. We shall endure this—if not with patience, without resentment. Love to dear Gusty, and believe me your affectionate sister,
 "MARION CULDUFF."

Such were the most striking passages of a long letter which, fortunately for Nelly, Mr. Cutbill's presence at the breakfast-table rescued her from the indiscretion of reading aloud. One or two extracts she did give, but soon saw that the document was one which could not be laid on the table, nor given without prejudice to the public service. Her confusion, as she crumpled up the paper, and thrust it back into its envelope, was quickly remarked, and Mr. Cutbill, with his accustomed tact, observed, "I'd lay a 'fiver' we've all of us been led out for a canter in that epistle. It's enough to see Miss Ellen's face to know that she wouldn't read it out for fifty pounds. Eh, what!" cried he, stooping and rubbing his leg; "I told you to say, 'Stop her,' Master Jack, when you wanted to take way off, but I never said, Kick my shins."

This absurd exclamation, and the laugh it provoked, was a lucky diversion, and they arose from table without another thought on Marion's epistle.

"Has Nelly shown you Marion's note?" asked Jack, as he strolled with Julia through the garden.

"No, and it is perhaps the only letter I ever knew her to get without handing me to read."

"I suspect, with Cutbill, that we all of us catch it in that pleasant document."

"You perhaps are the only one who has escaped."

"As for me, I am not even remembered. Well, I'll bear even that, if I can be sure of a little sympathy in another quarter."

"Master Jack, you ask for too many professions. I have told you already to-day, and I don't mean to repeat it for a week, that you are not odious to me."

"But will you not remember, Julia, the long months of banishment I have suffered? Will you not bear in mind that if I have lived longingly for this moment, it is cruel now to dash it with a doubt."

"But it is exactly what I am not doing! I have given you fully as much encouragement as is good for you. I have owned—and it is a rash confession for a girl to make at any time—that I care for you more than

any part of our prospects for the future could warrant, and if I go one step further there will be nothing for it but for you to buy a bragotza and turn fisherman, and for me to get a basket and sell pilchards in the piazza."

"You needn't taunt me with my poverty, I feel it bitterly enough already. Nor have you any right to think me unable to win a living."

"There, again, you wrong me. I only said, Do not, in your impatience to reach your goal, make it not worth the winning. Don't forget what I told you about long engagements. A man's share of them is the worst."

"But you love me, Julia?" said he, drawing her close to him.

"How tiresome you are!" said she, trying to free herself from his arm.

"Let me once—only once—hear you say this, and I swear to you, Julia, I'll never tease you more."

"Well, then, if I must——"

More was not spoken, for the lips were pressed by a rapturous kiss, as he clasped her to his heart, muttering, "My own, my own!"

"I declare there is Nelly," cried Julia, wresting herself from his embrace, and starting off; not, however, towards Ellen, but in the direction of the house.

"Oh, Nelly," said Jack, rushing towards his sister, "she loves me—she has said so—she is all my own."

"Of course she is, Jack. I never doubted it, though I own I scarcely thought she'd have told it."

And the brother and sister walked along hand in hand without speaking, a closer pressure of the fingers at intervals alone revealing how they followed the same thoughts and lived in the same joys.

CHAPTER LXII.

DEALING WITH CUTBILL.

"What's to be done with Cutbill?—will any one tell me this?" was the anxious question Augustus asked as he stood in a group composed of Jack, Nelly, and the L'Estranges. "As to Sedley meeting him at all, I know that is out of the question; but the mere fact of finding the man here will so discredit us in Sedley's eyes that it is more than likely he will pitch up the whole case and say good-by to us for ever."

"But can he do that?" asked Julia. "Can he, I mean, permit a matter of temper or personal feeling to interfere in a dry affair of duty?"

"Of course he can; where his counsels are disregarded and even counteracted he need not continue his guidance. He is a hot-tempered man besides, and has more than once shown me that he will not bear provocation beyond certain limits."

"I think," began L'Estrange, "if I were in your place, I'd tell Cutbill. I'd explain to him how matters stood; and——"

"No, no," broke in Jack; "that won't do at all. The poor dog is too hard up for that."

"Jack is right," said Nelly, warmly.

"Of course he is, so far as Mr. Outbill goes," broke in Julia; "but we want to do right to every one. Now, how about your brother and his suit?"

"What if I were to show him this letter," said Augustus, "to let him see that Sedley means to be here to-morrow, to remain at farthest three days; is it not likely Outbill would himself desire to avoid meeting him?"

"Not a bit of it," cried Jack. "It's the thing of all others he'd glory in; he'd be full of all the lively impertinences that he could play off on the lawyer; and he'd write a comic song on him,—ay, and sing it in his own presence."

"Nothing more likely," said Julia, gravely.

"Then what is to be done? Is there no escape out of the difficulty?" asked Augustus.

"Yes," said Nelly, "I think there is. The way I should advise would be this: I'd show Mr. Outbill Sedley's letter, and taking him into counsel, as it were, on the embarrassment of his own position, I'd say, 'We must hide you somewhere for these three days.'"

"But he wouldn't see it, Nelly. He'd laugh at your delicate scruples; he'd say, 'That's the one man in all Europe I'm dying to meet.'"

"Nelly is quite right, notwithstanding," said Julia. "There is more than one side to Mr. Outbill's nature. He'd like to be thought a very punctilious gentleman fully as much as a very jocose companion. Make him believe that in keeping out of sight here at this moment he will be exercising a most refined delicacy,—doing what nothing short of a high-bred sensibility would ever have dreamed of, and you'll see he'll be as delighted with his part as ever he was with his coarse drollery. And here he comes to test my theory about him."

As she spoke Outbill came lounging up the garden walk, too busily engaged in making a paper cigarette to see those in front of him.

"I'm sure Mr. Outbill that cigarette must be intended for me," cried Julia, "seeing all the pains you are bestowing on its manufacture."

"Ah, Miss Julia, if I could only believe that you'd let me corrupt your morals to the extent of a pinch of Latakia——"

"Give me Sedley's letter, Gustus," said Nelly, "and leave the whole arrangement to me. Mr. Outbill, will you kindly let me have three minutes of your company. I want a bit of advice from you." And she took his arm as she spoke and led him down the garden. She wasted no time in preliminaries, but at once came to the point, saying, "We're in what you would call 'a fix' this morning, Mr. Outbill: my brother's lawyer, Mr. Sedley, is coming here most unexpectedly. We know that some unpleasant passages have occurred between you and that gentleman, making a meeting between you quite impossible; and in the great difficulty

of the moment I have charged myself with the solution of the embarrassment, and now begin to see that without your aid I am powerless. Will you help me; that is, will you advise with or for me?"

"Of course I will; but, first of all, where's the difficulty you speak of? I'd no more mind meeting this man,—sitting next him at dinner, if you like, than I would an old creditor—and I have a good many of them—that I never mean to pay."

"We never doubted *your* tact, Mr. Cutbill," said she, with a strong emphasis on the pronoun.

"If so, then the matter is easy enough. Tact always serves for two. If I be the man you take me for, that crabbed old fellow will love me like a brother before the first day is over."

"That's not the question, Mr. Cutbill. Your personal powers of captivity no one disputes, if only they get a fair field for their exercise; but what we fear is that Mr. Sedley, being the hot-tempered, hasty man he is, will not give you this chance. My brother has twice already been on the verge of a rupture with him for having acted on his own independent judgment. I believe nothing but his regard for poor dear papa would have made him forgive Augustus; and when I tell you that in the present critical state of our cause his desertion of us would be fatal, I am sure you will do anything to avert such a calamity."

"Let us meet, Miss Ellen; let us dine together once—I only ask once—and if I don't borrow money from him before he takes his bedroom candle, you may scratch Tom Cutbill, and put him off 'the course' for ever. What does that impatient shrug of the shoulders mean? Is it as much as to say, 'What a conceited snob it is!' eh?"

"Oh, Mr. Cutbill, you couldn't possibly——"

"Couldn't I though? And don't I know well that I am just as vain of my little talents,—as your friend, Miss Julia, called them,—as you and others are ready to ridicule them; but the real difference between us after all is this: *You* think the world at large is a monstrous clever creature, with great acuteness, great discrimination and great delicacy; and I *know* it to be a great overgrown bully, mistaking half it hears, and blundering all it says, so that any one, I don't care who he is, that will stand out from the crowd in life, think his own thoughts and guide his own actions, may just do what he pleases with that unwieldy old monster, making it believe it's the master, all the while it is a mere slave and a drudge. There's another shrug of the shoulders. Why not say it out—you're a puppy, Tom Cutbill?"

"First of all it wouldn't be polite, and secondly——"

"Never mind the secondly. It's quite enough for me to see that I have not convinced you, nor am I half as clever a fellow as I think myself; and do you know, you're the first I ever knew dispute the position."

"But I do not. I subscribe to it implicitly; my presence here, at this moment, attests how I believe it. It is exactly because I regard

Mr. Cutbill as the cleverest person I know—the very ablest to extricate one from a difficulty—that I have come to him this morning.”

“My honour is satisfied !” said he, laying his hand on his heart, and bowing with a grand seriousness.

“And now,” said Nelly, hurriedly, for her patience had well nigh given in, “what’s to be done ? I have a project of my own, but I don’t know whether you would agree to it.”

“Not agree to a project of yours ! What do you take me for, Miss Ellen ?”

“My dear Mr. Cutbill, I have exhausted all my compliments. I can only say I endorse all the preceding with compound interest.”

Slightly piqued by the half sarcasm of her manner, he simply said—“And your project ; what is it ?”

“That you should be a close prisoner for the short time Mr. Sedley stays here ; sufficiently near to be able to communicate and advise with you—for we count much on your counsel—and yet totally safe from even the chance of meeting him. There is a small chapel about a mile off, where the family confessor used to live, in two neat little rooms adjoining the building. These shall be made comfortable for you. We will take care—I will—that you are not starved ; and some of us will be sure to go and see you every day, and report all that goes on. I foresee a number of details, but I have no time now to discuss them ; the great point is, do you agree ?”

“This is Miss Julia’s scheme, is it not ?”

“No, I assure you ; on my word it is mine.”

“But you have concerted it with her ?”

“Not even that ; she knows nothing of it.”

“With whom, then, have you talked it over ?”

“With none, save Mr. Cutbill.”

“In that case, Mr. Cutbill complies,” said he, with a theatrical air of condescension.

“You will go there ?”

“Yes, I promise it.”

“And remain close prisoner till I liberate you ?”

“Everything you command.”

“I thank you much, and I am very proud of my success,” said she, offering her hand. “Shall I own to you,” said she, after a pause, “that my brother’s nerves have been so shaken by the agitation he has passed through, and by the continual pressure of thinking that it is his own personal fault that this battle has been so ill contested, that the faintest show of censure on him now would be more than he could bear. I have little doubt that the cause is lost, and I am only eager that poor Augustus should not feel it was lost through him.”

She was greatly agitated as she spoke, and, with a hurried farewell, she turned and left him.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE CLIENT AND HIS LAWYER.

WHEN the rest of the party had left the dinner-room, and Augustus Bramleigh and Mr. Sedley found themselves alone, a silence of several minutes ensued; a very solemn pause each felt it, well knowing that at such a moment the slightest word may be the signal for disclosures which involve a destiny. Up to this, nothing had been said on either side of "the cause;" and though Sedley had travelled across Europe to speak of it, he waited with decorous reserve till his host should invite him to the topic.

Bramleigh, an awkward and timid man at the best of times, was still more so when he found himself in a situation in which he should give the initiative. As the entertainer of a guest, too, he fancied that to introduce his personal interests as matter of conversation would be in bad taste, and so he fidgeted, and passed the decanters across the table with a nervous impatience, trying to seem at his ease, and stammering out at last some unmeaning question about the other's journey.

Sedley replied to the inquiry with a cold and measured politeness, as a man might to a matter purely irrelevant.

"The Continent is comparatively new ground to you, Mr. Sedley?"

"Entirely so. I have never been beyond Brussels before this."

"Late years have nearly effaced national peculiarities. One crosses frontiers now, and never remembers a change of country."

"Quite so."

"The money, the coinage, perhaps, is the great reminder after all."

"Money is the great reminder of almost everything everywhere, sir," said Sedley, with a stern and decisive tone.

"I am afraid you are right," said Bramleigh, with a faint sigh, and now they seemed to stand on the brink of a precipice, and look over.

"What news have you for me?" said he at last, gulping as he spoke.

"None to cheer, nothing to give encouragement. The discovery at Castello will ensure them a verdict. We cannot dispute the marriage, it was solemnized in all form and duly witnessed. The birth of the child was also carefully authenticated—there isn't a flaw in the registry, and they'll take care to remind us on the second trial of how freely we scattered our contemptuous sarcasms on the illegitimacy of this connexion on the first record."

"Is the case hopeless then?"

"Nothing is hopeless where a jury enters, but it is only short of hopeless. Kelson of course says he is sure, and perhaps so should I, in his place. Still they might disagree again: there's a strong repugnance felt by juries against dispossessing an old occupant. All can feel the hardship of his case, and the sympathy for him goes a great way."

"Still this would only serve to protract matters,—they'd bring another action."

"Of course they would, and Kelson has money!"

"I declare I see no benefit in continuing a hopeless contest."

"Don't be hopeless then, that's the remedy."

Bramleigh made a slight gesture of impatience, and slight as it was, Sedley observed it.

"You have never treated this case as your father would have done, Mr. Bramleigh. He had a rare spirit to face a contest. I remember one day hinting to him that if this claim could be backed by money it would be a very formidable suit, and his answer was:—'When I strike my flag, Sedley, the enemy will find the prize was scarcely worth fighting for.' I knew what he meant was, he'd have mortgaged the estate to every shilling of its value, before there arose a question of his title."

"I don't believe it, sir; I tell you to your face I don't believe it," cried Bramleigh, passionately. "My father was a man of honour, and never would have descended to such duplicity."

"My dear, sir, I have not come twelve hundred miles to discuss a question in ethics, nor will I risk myself in a discussion with you. I repeat, sir, that had your father lived to meet this contention, we should not have found ourselves where we are to-day. Your father was a man of considerable capacity, Mr. Bramleigh. He conducted a large and important house with consummate skill; brought up his family handsomely; and had he been spared, would have seen every one of them in positions of honour and consequence."

"To every word in his praise I subscribe heartily and gratefully;" and there was a tremor in his voice as Bramleigh spoke.

"He has been spared a sad spectacle, I must say," continued Sedley. "With the exception of your sister who married that viscount, ruin—there's only one word for it—ruin has fallen upon you all."

"Will you forgive me if I remind you that you are my lawyer, Mr. Sedley, not my chaplain, nor my confessor."

"Lawyer without a suit! Why, my dear sir, there will be soon nothing to litigate. You and all belonging to you were an imposition and a fraud. There, there! It's nothing to grow angry over; how could you or any of you suspect your father's legitimacy? You accepted the situation as you found it, as all of us do. That you regarded Praecental as a cheat was no fault of yours,—he says so himself. I have seen him and talked with him; he was at Kelson's when I called last week, and old Kelson said,—'My client is in the next room: he says you treated him rudely one day he went to your office. I wish you'd step in and say a civil word or two. It would do good, Sedley. I tell you, it would do good!' and he laid such a significant stress on the word, that I walked straight in and said how very sorry I felt for having expressed myself in a way that could offend him. 'At all events, sir,' said I, 'if you will not accept my apology for myself, let me beseech you to separate the interest of my client from my rudeness, and let not Mr. Bramleigh be prejudiced because his lawyer was ill-mannered.' 'It's all forgotten, never to be recalled,' said he,

shaking my hand. 'Has Kelson told you my intentions towards Bramleigh ?'

" 'He has told me nothing,' said I.

" 'Tell him, Kelson. I can't make the matter plain as you can. Tell Mr. Sedley what we were thinking of.'

" In one word, sir, his plan was a partition of the property. He would neither disturb your title, nor dispute your name. You should be the Bramleights of Castello, merely paying him a rentcharge of four thousand a year. Kelson suggested more, but he said a hundred thousand francs was ample, and he made no scruple of adding that he never was master of as many sous in his life.

" 'And what does Kelson say to this ?' asked I.

" 'Kelson says what Sedley would say—that it is a piece of Quixotism worthy of Hanwell.'

" 'Ma foi,' said Pracontal, 'it is not the first time I have fired in the air.'

" We talked for two hours over the matter. Part of what Pracontal said was good sound sense, well reasoned and acutely expressed ; part was sentimental rubbish, not fit to listen to. At last I obtained leave to submit the whole affair to you, not by letter—that they wouldn't have—but personally, and there, in one word, is the reason of my journey.

" Before I left town, however, I saw the Attorney-General, whose opinion I had already taken on certain points of the case. He was a personal friend of your father, and willingly entered upon it. When I told him Pracontal's proposal he smiled dubiously, and said, 'Why, it's a confession of defeat ; the man must know his case will break down, or he never would offer such conditions.'

" I tried to persuade him that without knowing, seeing, hearing this Frenchman, it would not be easy to imagine such an action proceeding from a sane man, but that his exalted style of talk and his inflated sentimentality made the thing credible. He wants to belong to a family, to be owned and accepted as some one's relative. The man is dying of the shame of his isolation.

" 'Let him marry.'

" 'So he means, and I hear to Bramleigh's widow, Lady Augusta.'

" He laughed heartily at this and said, 'It's the only encumbrance on the property.' And now, Mr. Bramleigh, you are to judge, if you can ; is this the offer of generosity, or is it the crafty proposal of a beaten adversary ? I don't mean to say it is an easy point to decide on, or that a man can hit it off at once. Consult those about you ; take into consideration the situation you stand in and all its dangers ; bethink you what an adverse verdict may bring if we push them to a trial ; and even if the proposal be, as Mr. Attorney thinks, the cry of weakness, is it wise to disregard it ?"

" Would you have laid such a proposal before my father, Sedley ?" said Bramleigh, with a scarcely perceptible smile.

" Not for five hundred pounds, sir,"

"I thought not."

"Ay, but remember your father would never have landed us where we stand now, Mr. Bramleigh."

Augustus winced under this remark, but said nothing.

"If the case be what you think it, Sedley," said he at last, "this is a noble offer."

"So say I."

"There is much to think over in it. If I stood alone here, and if my own were the only interests involved, I think—that is I hope—I know what answer I should give; but there are others. You have seen my sister; you thought she looked thin and delicate—and she may well do so, her cares overtax her strength; and my poor brother too, that fine-hearted fellow, what is to become of *him*? And yet, Sedley," cried he suddenly, "if either of them were to suspect that this—this—what shall I call it?—this arrangement—stood on no basis of right, but was simply an act of generous forbearance, I'd stake my life on it, they'd refuse it."

"You must not consult *them* then, that's clear."

"But I will not decide till I do so."

"Oh, for five minutes—only five minutes—of your poor father's strong sense and sound intellect, and I might send off my telegram to-night." And with this speech, delivered slowly and determinately, the old man arose, took his bed-room candle, and walked away.

CHAPTER LXIV.

A FIRST GLEAM OF LIGHT.

AFTER a sleepless, anxious night, in which he canvassed all that Sedley had told him, Bramleigh presented himself at Jack's bedside as the day was breaking. Though the sailor was not worldly-wise, nor endowed with much knowledge of life, he had, as Augustus knew, a rough and ready judgment which, allied to a spirit of high honour, rarely failed in detecting that course which in the long run proved best. Jack, too, was no casuist, no hair-splitter; he took wide, commonplace views, and in this way was sure to do what nine out of ten ordinary men would approve of, and this was the sort of counsel that Bramleigh now desired to set side by side with his own deeply considered opinion.

Jack listened attentively to his brother's explanation, not once interrupting him by a word or a question till he had finished, and then, laying his hand gently on the other's, said, "You know well, Gusty, that you couldn't do this."

"I thought you would say so, Jack."

"You'd be a fool to part with what you owned, or a knave to sell what did not belong to you."

"My own judgment precisely."

"I'd not bother myself then with Sedley's pros and cons, nor entertain

the question about saving what one could out of the wreck. If you haven't a right to a plank in the ship, you have no right to her because she is on the rocks. Say 'No,' Gusty; say 'No' at once."

"It would be at best a compromise on the life of one man, for Pracontal's son, if he should leave one, could revive the claim."

"Don't let us go so far, Gusty. Let us deal with the case as it stands before us. Say 'No,' and have done with the matter at once."

Augustus leaned his head between his hands and fell into a deep vein of thought.

"You've had your trial of humble fortune now, Gusty," continued Jack, "and I don't see that it has soured you; I see no signs of fretting or irritability about you, old fellow; I'll even say that I never remember you jollier or heartier. Isn't it true, this sort of life has no terror for you?"

"Think of Nelly, Jack."

"Nelly is better able to brave hard fortune than either of us. She never was spoiled when we were rich, and she had no pretensions to lay down when we became poor."

"And yourself, my poor fellow? I've had many a plan of what I meant by you."

"Never waste a thought about me. I'll buy a trabaccolo. They're the handiest coasting craft that ever sailed; and I'll see if the fruit-trade in the Levant won't feed me, and we'll live here, Gusty, all together. Come now, tell me frankly, would you exchange that for Castello, if you had to go back there and live alone—eh?"

"I'll not say I would; but——"

"There's no 'but;' the thing is clear and plain enough. This place wouldn't suit Marion or Temple; but they'll not try it. Take my word for it, of all our fine acquaintances, not one will ever come down here to see how we bear our reduced lot in life. We'll start fresh in the race, and we'll talk of long ago and our grand times without a touch of repining."

"I'm quite ready to try it, Jack."

"That's well said," said he, grasping his hand, and pressing it affectionately. "And you'll say 'No' to this offer? I knew you would. Not but the Frenchman is a fine fellow, Gusty. I didn't believe it was in his nation to behave as nobly; for, mark you, I have no doubts, no misgivings about his motives. I'd say all was honest and above board in his offer."

"I join you in that opinion, Jack; and one of these days I hope to tell him so."

"That's the way to fight the battle of life," cried the sailor, enthusiastically. "Stand by your guns manfully, and, if you're beaten, haul down your flag in all honour to the fellow who has been able to thrash you. The more you respect him, the higher you esteem yourself. Get rid of that old lawyer as soon as you can, Gusty; he's not a pleasant fellow, and we all want Cutty back again."

"Sedley will only be too glad to escape ; he's not in love with our barbarism."

"I'm to breakfast with Cutty this morning. I was nigh forgetting it. I hope I may tell him that his term of banishment is nearly over."

"I imagine Sedley will not remain beyond to-morrow."

"That will be grand news for Cutty, for he can't bear solitude. He says himself he'd rather be in the Marahalsea with plenty of companions, than be a king and have no associates. By the way, am I at liberty to tell him about this offer of Pracontal's ? He knows the whole history, and the man too."

"Tell him if you like. The Frenchman is a favourite with him, and this will be another reason for thinking well of him."

"That's the way to live, Gusty. Keep the ship's company in good humour, and the voyage will be all the happier."

After a few words they parted, Augustus to prepare a formal reply to his lawyer, and Jack to keep his engagement with Outbill. Though it was something of a long walk, Jack never felt it so ; his mind was full of pleasant thoughts of the future. To feel that Julia loved him, and to know that a life of personal effort and enterprise was before him, were thoughts of overwhelming delight. He was now to show himself worthy of her love, and he would do this. With what resolution he would address himself to the stern work of life ! It was not enough to say affluence had not spoiled him, he ought to be able to prove that the gentleman element was a source of energy and perseverance which no reverses could discourage. Julia was a girl to value this. She herself had learned how to meet a fallen condition, and had sacrificed nothing that graced or adorned her nature in the struggle. Nay, she was more loveable now than he had ever known her. Was it not downright luck that had taught them both to bear an altered lot before the trial of their married life began ? It was thus he reasoned as he went, canvassing his condition in every way, and contented with it in all.

"What good news have you got this morning ?" cried Outbill as he entered. "I never saw you look so jolly in my life."

"Well, I did find half-a-crown in the pocket of an old letter-case this morning ; but it's the only piece of unexpected luck that has befallen me."

"Is the lawyer gone ?"

"No."

"Nor thinking of going ?"

"I won't say that. I suspect he'll not make a long halt after he has a talk with Gusty to-day."

And now Jack told in few words the object of Sedley's coming, what Pracontal had offered, and what Augustus had resolved to send for answer.

"I'd have said the Frenchman was the biggest fool in Europe if I hadn't heard of your brother," said Outbill, puffing out a long column of smoke, and giving a deep sigh.

"That's not exactly how I read each of them," said Jack, sternly.

"Possibly; but it's the true rendering after all. Consider for one moment——"

"Not for half a moment, Master Cutbill. That my brother might make a very good bargain, by simply bartering such an insignificant thing as his honour as a gentleman, is easy to see; and that scores of people wouldn't understand that such a compromise was in question, or was of much consequence, even if it were, is also easy to see; and we need waste no time in discussing this. I say Gusty's right, and I maintain it; and if you like to hold a different opinion, do so in heaven's name, but don't disparage motives simply because you can't feel them."

"Are you better after all that?" said Cutbill, drily, as he filled Jack's glass with water, and pushed it towards him. "Do you feel refreshed?"

"Much better—considerably relieved."

"Could I offer you anything cooling or calming?"

"Nothing half as cool as yourself, Cutty. And now let's change the subject, for it's one I'll not stand any chaff about."

"Am I safe in recommending you that grilled chicken, or is it indiscreet in me to say you'll find those sardines good?"

Jack helped himself, and ate on without a word. At last, he lifted his head, and, looking around him, said, "You've very nice quarters here, Cutbill."

"As neat as paint. I was thinking this morning whether I'd not ask your brother to rent me this little place. I feel quite romantic since I've come up here, with the nightingales, and the cicadas, and the rest of them."

"If there were only a few more rooms like this, I'd dispute the tenancy with you."

"There's a sea-view for you," said he, throwing wide the shutters. "The whole Bocca di Cattaro and the islands in the distance. Naples is nothing to it! And when you have feasted your eye with worldly beauty, and want a touch of celestial beatitude, you've only to do this." And he arose, and walking over to one side of the room, drew back a small curtain of green silk, disclosing behind it an ornamental screen or "grille" of iron-work.

"What does that mean?" asked Jack.

"That means that the occupant of this room, when devoutly disposed, could be able to hear mass without the trouble of going for it. This little grating here looks into the chapel; and there are evidences about that members of the family who lived at the villa were accustomed to come up here at times to pass days of solitude, and perhaps penance, which, after all, judging from the indulgent character of this little provision here, were probably not over severe."

"Nelly has told me of this chapel. Can we see it?"

"No; it's locked and barred like a gaol. I've tried to peep in through this grating; but it's too dark to see anything."

"But this grating is on a hinge," said Jack. "Don't you see, it was meant to open, though it appears not to have done so for some years back? Here's the secret of it." And pressing a small knob in the wall, the framework became at once moveable, and opened like a window.

"I hope it's not sacrilege, but I mean to go in," said Jack, who, mounting on a chair, with a sailor's agility insinuated himself through the aperture, and invited Cutbill to follow.

"No, no; I wasn't brought up a rope-dancer," said he, gruffly. "If you can't manage to open the door for me——"

"But it's what I can. I can push back every bolt. Come round now, and I'll admit you."

By the time Cutbill had reached the entrance, Jack had succeeded in opening the massive doors; and as he flung them wide, a flood of light poured into the little crypt, with its splendid altar and its silver lamps; its floor of tessellated marble, and its ceiling a mass of gilded tracery almost too bright to look on: but it was not at the glittering splendour of gold or gems that they now stood enraptured. It was in speechless wonderment of the picture that formed the altar-piece, which was a Madonna,—a perfect copy, in every lineament and line, of the Flora at Castello. Save that an expression of ecstatic rapture had replaced the look of joyous delight, they were the same, and unquestionably were derived from the same original.

"Do you know that?" cried Cutbill.

"Know it! Why, it's our own fresco at Castello."

"And by the same hand, too," cried Cutbill. "Here are the initials in the corner—G. L. ! Of all the strange things that I have ever met in life, this is the strangest!" And he leaned on the railing of the altar, and gazed on the picture with intense interest.

"I can make nothing of it," muttered Jack.

"And yet there's a great story in it," said Cutbill, in a low, serious tone. "That picture was a portrait—a portrait of the painter's daughter; and that painter's daughter was the wife of your grandfather, Montagu Bramleigh; and it is her grandchild now, the man called Pracontal, who claims your estates."

"How do you pretend to know all this?"

"I know it chapter and verse. I have gone over the whole history with that old painter's journal before me. I have seen several studies of that girl's face,—*"Enrichetta Lami,"* she was called,—and I have read the entry of her marriage with your grandfather in the parish register. A terrible fact for your poor brother, for it clenches his ruin. Was there ever as singular a chance in life as the re-appearance of this face here?"

"Coming as though to taunt us with our downfall; though certainly that lovely brow and those tearful eyes have no scorn in them. She must have been a great beauty."

"Pracontal raves of her beauty, and says that none of these pictures

do her justice, except one at Urbino. At least he gathers this from the journal, which he swears by as if it were gospel."

"I'd call her handsomer in that picture than in our fresco. I wonder if this were painted earlier or later."

"I can answer that question; for the old sacristan who came up here yesterday, and fell to talking about the chapel, mentioned how the painter—a gran' maestro he called him—bargained to be buried at the foot of the altar, and the Marchese had not kept his word, not liking to break up the marble pavement, and had him interred outside the walls, with the prior's grave and a monk at either side of him. His brushes and colours, and his tools for fresco-work, were all buried in the chapel, for they had been blessed by the Pope's Nuncio, after the completion of the basilica at Udine. Haven't I remembered my story well, and the old fellow didn't tell it above nine times over? This was old Lami's last work, and here his last resting-place."

"What is it seems so familiar to me in that name? Every time you have uttered it I am ready to say I have heard of it before."

"What so likely, from Augustus or your sister."

"No. I can answer for it that neither of them ever spoke of him to me. I know it was not from *them* I heard it."

"But how tell the story of this suit without naming him?"

"They never did tell me the story of the suit, beyond the fact that my grandfather had been married privately in early life, and left a son whom he had not seen nor recognized, but took every means to disavow and disown. Wait now, a moment; my mind is coming to it. I think I have the clue to this old fellow's name. I must go back to the villa, however, to be certain."

"Not a word of our discovery here to any one," cried Outbill. "We must arrange to bring them all here, and let them be surprised as we were."

"I'll be back with you within an hour," said Jack. "My head is full of this, and I'll tell you why when I return."

And they parted.

Before Outbill could believe it possible, Jack, flushed and heated, re-entered the room. He had run at top speed, found what he sought for, and came back in intense eagerness to declare the result.

"You've lost no time, Jack; nor have I either. I took up the flags under the altar-steps, and came upon this oak box. I suppose it was sacrilege, but I carried it off here to examine at our leisure."

"Look here," cried Jack, "look at this scrap of paper. It was given to me at the galleys at Ischia by the fellow I was chained to. Read these names, Giacomo Lami—whose daughter was Enrichetta—I was to trace him out, and communicate, if I could, with this other man, Tonino Baldassare or Pracontal—he was called by both names. Bolton of Naples could trace him."

A long low whistle was Outbill's only reply as he took the paper, and studied it long and attentively.

"Why, this is the whole story," cried he at last. "This old galley-slave is the real claimant, and Pracontal has no right, while Niccolo, or whatever his name be, lives. This may turn out glorious news for your brother, but I'm not lawyer enough to say whether it may not be the Crown that will benefit, if his estates be confiscated for felony."

"I don't think that this was the sort of service Old Nick asked me to render him when we parted," said Jack, drily.

"Probably not. He only asked you to help his son to take away your brother's estate."

"Old Nick knew nothing about whose brother I was. He trusted me to do him a service, and I told him I would."

Though Outbill paid but little attention to him, Jack talked on for some time of his old comrade, recounting the strange traits of his nature, and remembering with gratitude such little kindness as it was in his power to show.

"I'd have gone clean out of my mind but for him," said he at last.

"And we have all believed that this fellow was lost at sea," muttered Outbill. "Bolton gave up all his papers and the remnant of his property to his son in that belief."

"Nor does he wish to be thought living now. He charged me to give no clue to him. He even said I was to speak of him as one I had met at Monte Video years ago."

"These are things for a 'cuter head than yours or mine, Jack," said Outbill, with a cunning look. "We're not the men to see our way through this tangle. Go and show that scrap of paper to Sedley, and take this box with you. Tell him how you came by each. That old fox will soon see whether they confirm the case against your brother or disclose a flaw in it."

"And is that the way I'm to keep my word to Old Nick?" said Jack, doggedly.

"I don't suppose you ever bound yourself to injure your own flesh and blood by a blank promise. I don't believe there's a family in Europe with as many scruples, and as little sense how to deal with them."

"Civil that, certainly."

"Not a bit civil, only true; but let us not squabble. Go and tell Sedley what we have chanced upon. These men have a way of looking at the commonest events—and this is no common event—that you nor I have never dreamed of. If Pracontal's father be alive, Pracontal cannot be the claimant to your estates; that much, I take it, is certain. At all events Sedley's the man to answer this."

Half pushing Jack out of the room while he deposited the box in his hands, Outbill at last sent him off, not very willingly indeed, or concurringly, but like one who, in spite of himself, saw he was obliged to take a particular course, and travel a road without the slightest suspicion of where it led to.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE LIGHT STRONGER.

"SEDLEY asks for the best Italian scholar amongst us," said Augustus the next morning at breakfast, "and the voice of public opinion calls upon you, Julia."

"You know what Figaro said of 'common report.' I'll not repeat it," said she, laughing, "and I'll even behave as if I didn't believe it. And now what is wanted of me, or my Italian scholarship?"

"The matter is thus: Sedley has received some papers"—here a look of intelligence passed between Augustus and Jack—"which he imagines may be of consequence, but being in Italian, he can't read them. He needs a translator——"

"I am equal to that," broke she in, "but why don't we do it in committee, as you political people call it? Five heads are better than one."

"Mr. Sedley is absolute, and will have but one." ↗

"And am I to be closeted for a whole morning with Mr. Sedley? I declare it seems compromising. Jack frowns at me. There is nothing so prudish as a sailor. I wish any one would tell me why it is so."

"Well, the matter is as you have stated it," said Augustus. "Mr. Sedley says, 'Let me have the aid of some one who will not grudge me two hours, mayhap three.'"

"What if the documents should turn out love-letters?"

"Julia! Julia!" cried Jack reprovingly, for in reality her sallies kept him in constant anxiety.

"I can't help it, Jack; I must be prudent, even if I shock you by my precautions. I repeat, if these be love-letters?"

"Well, I can answer so far," said Augustus. "They are not—at least I can almost assert they are not."

"I wish Nelly would go," said Julia, with mock seriousness. "I see Jack is wretched about it, and after all Mr. Sedley, though not exactly a young man,——"

"I declare this is too bad," said Jack, rising angrily from table, and then throwing himself back in his chair, as if in conflict with his own temper.

"She is provoking, there is no doubt of it, and on board ship we'd not stand that sort of thing five minutes," said Julia, with a demure air, "but on land, and amongst terrestrial creatures, Master Jack, I know nothing for it but patience."

"Patience!" muttered he, with an expression that made them all burst out laughing.

"So I may tell Sedley you will aid him?" asked Bramleigh.

"I'm ready now. Indeed, the sooner begun the better, for we have a long walk project—haven't we, Jack?—for this afternoon."

"Yes, if we have patience for it," said he. And once more the laugh broke forth as they arose from table and separated into little knots and groups through the room.

"I may tell you, Julia," said Augustus, in a half whisper, "that though I have given up hoping this many a day, it is just possible there may be something in these papers of moment to me, and I know I have only to say as much to secure your interest in them."

"I believe you can rely upon that," said she; and within less than five minutes afterwards she was seated at the table with Mr. Sedley in the study, an oblong box of oak clasped with brass in front of them, and a variety of papers lying scattered about.

"Have you got good eyes, Miss L'Estrange?" said Sedley, as he raised his spectacles, and turned a peering glance towards her.

"Good eyes?" repeated she, in some astonishment.

"Yes; I don't mean pretty eyes, or expressive eyes. I mean, have you keen sight?"

"I think I have."

"That's what I need from you at this moment; here are some papers with erasures and re-writings, and corrections in many places, and it will take all your acuteness to distinguish between the several contexts. Aided by a little knowledge of Latin, I have myself discovered some passages of considerable interest. I was half the night over them; but with your help, I count on accomplishing more in half an hour."

While he spoke, he continued to arrange papers in little packets before him, and, last of all, took from the box a painter's pallet and several brushes, along with two or three of those quaintly shaped knives men use in fresco-painting.

"Have you ever heard of the painter Giacomo Lami?" asked he.

"Of course I have. I know the whole story in which he figures. Mr. Bramleigh has told it to me."

"These are his tools. With these he accomplished those great works which have made him famous among modern artists, and by his will—at least I have spelled out so much—they were buried along with him."

"And where was he buried?"

"Here! here in Cattaro; his last work was the altar-piece of the little chapel of the villa."

"Was there ever so strange a coincidence!"

"The world is full of them, for it is a very small world after all. This old man, driven from place to place by police persecutions—for he had been a great conspirator in early life, and never got rid of the taste for it—came here as a sort of refuge, and painted the frescoes of the chapel at the price of being buried at the foot of the altar, which was denied him afterwards; for they only buried there this box, with his painting utensils and his few papers. It is to these papers I wish now to direct your attention, if good luck will have it that some of them may be of use. As for me, I can do little more than guess at the contents of most of them."

"Now these," continued he, "seem to me bills and accounts; are they such?"

"Yes, these are notes of expenses incurred in travelling; and he would seem to have been always on the road. Here is a curious note: 'Nuremberg: I like this old town much; its staid propriety and quietness suit me. I feel that I could work here; work at something greater and better than these daily efforts for mere bread; but why after all should I do more? I have none now to live for—none to work for! Enrichetta, and her boy, gone! and Carlotta——'"

"Wait a moment," said the lawyer, laying his hand on hers. "Enrichetta was the wife of Montagu Bramleigh, and this boy their son."

"Yes, and subsequently the father of Pracontal."

"And how so, if he died in boyhood?" muttered he; "read on."

"Now, Carlotta has deserted me! and for whom? For the man who betrayed me! for that Niccolo Baldassare who denounced five of us at Verona, and whose fault it is not that I have not died by the hangman."

"This is very important; a light is breaking on me through this cloud, too, that gives me hope."

"I see what you mean. You think that probably——"

"No matter what I think, search on through the papers; what is this? here is a drawing. Is it a mausoleum?"

"Yes; and the memorandum says: 'If I ever be rich enough, I shall place this over Enrichetta's remains at Louvain, and have her boy's body laid beside her. Poor child, that, if spared, might have inherited a princely state and fortune, he lies now in the pauper burial-ground at St. Michel. They let me, in consideration of what I had done in repairing their frescoes, place a wooden cross over him. I cut the inscription with my own hands—G. L. B., aged four years; the last hope of a shattered heart.'"

"Does not this strengthen your impression?" asked Julia, turning and confronting him.

"Aged four years; he was born, I think, in '99—the year after the rebellion in Ireland; this brings us nigh the date of his death. One moment. Let me note this." He hurriedly scratched off a few lines.

"St. Michel; where is St. Michel? It may be a church in some town."

"Or it may be that village in Savoy, at the foot of the Alps."

"True! We shall try there."

"These are without interest; they are notes of sums paid on the road, or received for his labour. All were evidently leaves of a book and torn out."

"What is this about Carlotta here?"

"Ah, yes. 'With this I send her all I had saved and put by. I knew he would ill-treat her; but to take her boy from her—her one joy and comfort in life—and to send him away she knows not whither, his very name changed, is more than I believed possible. She says that Niccolo has been to England, and found means to obtain money from M. B.'"

"Montagu Bramleigh," muttered Sedley; but she read on:—" 'This is too base; but it explains why he stole all the letters in poor Enrichetta's box, and the papers that told of her marriage.' "

"Are we on the track now?" cried the old lawyer, triumphantly. "This Baldassare was the father of the claimant, clearly enough. Enrichetta's child died, and the sister's husband substituted himself in his place."

"But this Niccolo who married Carlotta," said Julia, "must have been many years older than Enrichetta's son would have been had he lived."

"Who was to detect that? Don't you see that he never made personal application to the Bramleighs. He only addressed them by letter, which, knowing all Enrichetta's story, he could do without risk or danger. Kelson couldn't have been aware of this," muttered he; "but he had some misgivings—what were they?"

While the lawyer sat in deep thought, his face buried in his hands, Julia hurriedly turned over the papers. There were constant references to Carlotta's boy, whom the old man seemed to have loved tenderly; and different jottings showed how he had kept his birthday, which fell on the 4th of August. He was born at Zurich, where Baldassare worked as a watchmaker, his trade being, however, a mere mask to conceal his real occupation, that of conspirator.

"No," said Sedley, raising his head at last, "Kelson knew nothing of it. I'm certain he did not. It was a cleverly planned scheme throughout; and all the more so by suffering a whole generation to lapse before litigating the claim."

"But what is this here?" cried Julia, eagerly. "It is only a fragment, but listen to it:— 'There is no longer a doubt about it. Baldassare's first wife—a certain Marie de Pracontal—is alive, and living with her parents at Aix, in Savoy. Four of the committee have denounced him, and his fate is certain.'

" 'I had begun a letter to Bramleigh, to expose the fraud this scoundrel would pass upon him; but why should I spare him who killed my child? ' "

"First of all," said Sedley, reading from his notes, "we have the place and date of Enrichetta's death; secondly, the burial-place of Godfrey Lami Bramleigh set down as St. Michel, perhaps in Savoy. We have then the fact of the stolen papers, the copies of registries, and other documents. The marriage of Carlotta is not specified, but it is clearly evident, and we can even fix the time; and, last of all, we have this second wife, whose name, Pracontal, was always borne by the present claimant."

"And are you of opinion that this same Pracontal was a party to the fraud?" asked Julia.

"I am not certain," muttered he. "It is not too clear; the point is doubtful."

"But what have we here? It is a letter, with a post-mark on it." She read, "Leghorn, February 8, 1812." It was addressed to the Illustrissimo Maestro Lami, Porta Rossa, Florence, and signed N. Baldassare. It was but a few lines, and ran thus:—

"Seeing that Carlotta and her child now sleep at Pisa, why deny me your interest for my boy Anatole? You know well to what he might succeed, and how. Be unforgiving to me if you will. I have borne as hard things even as your hatred, but the child that has never wronged you deserves no part of this hate. I want but little from you: some dates, a few names—that I know you remember,—and last of all, my mind refreshed on a few events which I have heard you talk of again and again. Nor is it for me that you will do this, for I leave Europe within a week,—I shall return to it no more. Answer this Yes or No, at once, as I am about to quit this place. You know me well enough to know that I never threaten though I sometimes counsel, and my counsel now is, consent to the demand of—N. BALDASSARE."

Underneath was written in Lami's hand,—“I will carry this to my grave, that I may curse him who wrote it here and hereafter.”

"Now the story stands out complete," said Julia, "and this Pracontal belonged to neither Bramleigh nor Lami."

"Make me a literal translation of that letter," said Sedley. "It is of more moment than almost all we have yet read. I do not mean now, Miss Julia," said he, seeing she had already commenced to write; "for we have these fragments still to look over."

While the lawyer occupied himself with drawing up a memorandum for his own guidance, Julia, by his directions, went carefully over the remaining papers: few were of any interest, but these she docketed accurately, and with such brevity and clearness combined, that Sedley, little given to compliments, could not but praise her skill. It was not till the day began to decline that their labours drew to a close. It was a day of intense attention and great work, but only when it was over did she feel the exhaustion of overwrought powers.

"You are very, very tired," said Sedley. "It was too thoughtless of me; I ought to have remembered how unused you must be to fatigue like this."

"But I couldn't have left it, the interest was intense, and nothing would have persuaded me to leave the case without seeing how it ended."

"It will be necessary to authenticate these," said he, laying his hand on the papers, "and then we must show how we came by them."

"Jack can tell you this," said she; and now her strength failed her outright, and she lay back, overcome, and almost fainting. Sedley hurriedly rang for help, but before any one arrived Julia rallied, and with a faint smile said, "Don't make a fuss about me. You have what is really important to occupy you. I will go and lie down till evening;" and so she left him.

Thoughtfulness in Dress.

It is no doubt easier to find fault than to suggest remedies, and the two processes are generally about equally unpleasant to the person for whose benefit they are intended; but for the sake of variety it is as well to employ them alternately. As we have lately heard so much about the faults of women's dress, I may perhaps be allowed to offer some practical suggestions as to the principles upon which it ought to be regulated. It will at any rate afford me some consolation to embody in this form the result of many years' anxious struggle with the difficulties of the problem. Those difficulties are greater than can be imagined by any outsider. By outsiders I mean in the first place men, who, whatever their own cares and anxieties in the matter of dress, have at any rate to deal with a far less complicated system than ours; and in the next place all women who by reason of their wealth and beauty are raised above, or through poverty or indifference to personal appearance have sunk below, the ordinary level of careful contrivance. The first of these two classes of women, who have no need to plan their dress with care, will of course never be very large, and may be left out of our consideration altogether; but the second is recruited by many who might by proper measures be reclaimed from it, and who collectively might thus be induced to make a considerable contribution to the beauty of the world. Considering that every human being must dress somehow, and that most people's clothes pass in the course of every day before the eyes of a large number of their fellow-creatures, to almost all of whom they convey, or at least may convey some impression either of pleasure or pain, the sum of the effects produced by dress is by no means unimportant. As things are at present it is hard to say whether we should gain or lose most if it were decreed by Act of Parliament that we should all wear a uniform, or if some discovery were made by which the human race could be clothed with fur or plumage. The effect might be monotonous, but it would at least be inoffensive. It would be something like compounding for the extermination of barrel-organs by the abolition of concerts and choral services, and I think it very doubtful whether a majority might not be obtained in favour of such a compromise. However this may be, there is no doubt much room for improvement in the matter of dress, in respect of beauty, significance, and fitness.

The root of the evil is the want of thought; women no doubt care enough, talk enough, dream enough, and spend enough (both of time and money) about dress, but they do not generally put enough thought into it; and the result appears in the wretchedly meaningless and

inharmonious toilettes which fill our houses and streets. The defect is common to all classes, from the maid-of-all-work, whose imitation of her betters is as unreasoning as that of a monkey, to the lady of fashion who spends hundreds a year in producing a result which suggests nothing but Marshall and Snelgrove's.

The subject ought, I think, to be recognized as a branch, however humble, of women's education. The natural love of dress is too strong to be ignored or extinguished, and might be made not only a part, but an instrument of education, if the principles of reason and fitness upon which it really rests were better ascertained, and a knowledge of them were more generally diffused. It would be easy to suggest plans for the diffusion of such knowledge, but the first requisite is that the fact and the importance of its existence should be recognized. People are too apt to think of dress either as a mere amusement, not worth studying seriously, or else as a mysterious art which cannot be reduced to language.

This last opinion is indeed true with respect to a part, but by no means the most important part, of the subject. With regard to mere beauty, apart from significance or fitness, it is very difficult to lay down any principles in words. Beauty of form, colour, and texture can scarcely be reduced to language, except in so far as it depends upon fitness, and fitness (even when understood as including becomingness, or adaptation to the wearer's personal appearance) is very far from constituting the whole difference between beautiful and ugly dress. Without pretending to offer any opinion upon the vexed metaphysical questions respecting abstract beauty, I may safely say that there is an important element of beauty which is addressed rather to the eye than to the mind, and which can therefore be taught, if at all, only by means of that gradual education of the eye which is involved in the study of good models, whether natural or artificial. In respect of such merely sensuous beauty, it is no doubt true that there is no disputing about tastes. Preferences which cannot be justified by reason can have no more weight than that which public opinion may assign to the taste of the persons experiencing them. It is notorious that public opinion does give considerable weight to individual tastes in proportion to the degree of cultivation which they are known to have received; and that there is a sufficient agreement among such generally acknowledged judges to make their criticisms valuable in influencing the education of other eyes. But any verbal instructions must be confined to questions of harmony (or adaptation of parts to each other) and fitness (or adaptations whether of parts, or the whole of any dress to the conditions under which it is to be worn). A full statement of the principles which ought to be observed in these respects would contain all that part of the art of dress which can be put into words. I will attempt to give a sketch of those leading principles which I should especially wish to see impressed upon the minds of students.

A perfect dress, as it seems to me, would be one in which every part was harmoniously combined so as to produce a whole perfectly

adapted to the wearer's personal appearance, character, and circumstances, due regard being at the same time had to time, place, fashion, convenience, and economy.

On each of these heads I have a few words to say.

First, with regard to the combination of parts. This is one of the great difficulties of dress in all cases where expense is not a matter of indifference. A woman's outdoor attire, for instance, must be considered as consisting of at least three parts,—bonnet or hat, mantle (using the word as a generic term for all outdoor garments), and gown. If these were bought in equal numbers, so as to be bound together in life-long alliances, things would be comparatively easy; but it is not so. Their average longevity is different. That of bonnets is by far the shortest, while the extraordinary variations in the duration of shawls introduce a disturbing element into our calculations in respect of outdoor garments; and in the case of gowns, the question of their probable duration is complicated by the necessity of providing for all sorts of contingencies; so that no one can count upon reserving any one of these articles as the inseparable companion of any other, and the difficulty, therefore, of securing that each of the three parts of the outdoor costume shall bear witness of intentional adaptation to the other two is considerable. Some precautions may be suggested for the prevention of the most glaring inconsistencies. For instance, with respect to colour, there are two ways of lessening the danger: either the wearer may choose some one colour, with which every separate article of dress she buys shall harmonise, or she may decide in which of the three parts of her costume variation of colour shall be allowed, restricting herself in the other two parts sternly to neutral tints. These two plans may be in a measure combined, and after a certain experience has been acquired, a compromise between them is perhaps the best arrangement; but beginners should practise each separately. For instance, the choice of some one fundamental colour with which all the separate articles of dress should more or less severely harmonise, is, for every reason, worth making early in life; and for a time (at any rate until the wardrobe shall have been thoroughly weeded from unmanageable colours) it is wise to allow no departure from this rule. But not only does the eye naturally demand and enjoy more variety than a strict observance of this rule through life would allow, but the rule alone is insufficient to secure the object of perfect harmony even in colour between the parts of a toilette. Colours which harmonise with the same colour do not necessarily harmonise with each other. Besides this, regard must be had to the quantity and situation of each colour. Two colours which, if combined in very unequal proportions, are perfectly harmonious, may even as mere colour be intolerable in equal quantities. Again, the rule that two of these principal divisions of the outdoor costume shall be of neutral tint would, if severely followed, produce an unduly sombre effect, and would afford no further security against the very dangers just described. These rules, as I have said, only aim at

preventing some of the worst catastrophes in mere colour, and leave many other very important questions—that of light and shade among others—quite untouched. Another point in which harmony is to be observed is that of texture. A very common error is to put on a mantle of more delicate or richer texture than is suitable to the gown, as, for instance, lace over woollen stuff; the opposite error is less offensive because it may always be supposed that the mantle is thrown on by way of *bond fide* protection to the gown, and is related to it in some degree as the husk is to the kernel. Discrepancies between the bonnet and mantle are obviously more inexcusable than discrepancies between these and the gown, because the two former are understood to be assumed or laid aside together, whereas the gown may have to be worn for a greater number of hours, and under different circumstances. But this consideration, though it may excuse, cannot alter the want of harmony, which is always a serious defect.

I have but pointed out a few among the multitude of ways in which dress may be discordant. It is needless to give further instances, for in what I shall say about the different objects to which dress should be adapted, I shall be enumerating as many points in which harmony may be observed or violated. Each of these various considerations should influence consistently all the separate parts of a toilette; each one therefore introduces a fresh element of difficulty into the problem. It is obvious that in so complicated a process there are but two ways of securing unfailing consistency: one is an unlimited wardrobe, the other a steady adherence to fixed principles.

I have said that dress should be adapted to the wearer's (1) personal appearance, (2) character, and (3) circumstances.

1. *Personal Appearance*.—On the simple principle that harmony is in itself better than discord, and beauty better than ugliness, I should wish to see every dress adapted, as perfectly as can conveniently be done, to the colouring, the shape, and the size of the wearer. Words are so inadequate to describe colour that it is scarcely possible to lay down any rules about the becomingness of particular colours to particular complexions. Everything depends upon variations of tint too slight to be translated into language. The great thing, therefore, to be impressed upon the students under this head will be that they must choose their colours by the eye, and by that alone, never allowing themselves to act upon any theory without constant reference to it. Mr. Ruskin, in his *Elements of Drawing*, advises his pupils, if any one tells them that two colours are discordant, to take the earliest opportunity of combining them, in the conviction that they will afford a peculiarly lovely result. Without going quite so far as this, I think every artist would agree that some of the most unusual and, so to speak, unrecognized combinations are, in skilful hands, the most beautiful. But then the hands must be really skilful, and it is perhaps more dangerous to recommend than to forbid such combinations. One common notion, however, I must protest against, viz., that two different

tints of the same nominal colour,—for instance, turquoise and French blue,—should never be combined. All the most brilliant effects, not only of nature, but of oriental colouring, are produced by such subtle combinations, or rather gradations of colour; but the more subtle and lovely the more difficult they are to manage, and the more carefully the quantity, as well as the exact quality of each tint, must be chosen. The different effect of the same colours in different materials is very remarkable, and should be carefully pointed out to students. It is perhaps safe to say, as a general rule (but not without exceptions), that delicate colours, (such as lavender, dove colour, sea-green, pale blue, &c.) require fine materials. They not only soon fade and get spoilt in common or rough materials; but even when new such colours are apt to look washy and unsatisfactory in coarse stuffs,—their beauty often depends upon a sort of bloom which is to be seen only in silk or other fine textures. The principal combination of colour will, in some cases, be between the dress on the one hand, and the colouring of the wearer on the other; while in other cases the colouring of the wearer is so neutral or insignificant that the whole interest of the effect, in point of colour, must be obtained by combinations between the different parts of the dress itself. In every case, however, it is important to take care that the dress shall not overpower the wearer, either in colour or in any other respect.

In adapting the dress to the shape and size of the wearer, a certain knowledge of drawing and of the proper proportions of the figure is of course the chief help. There are, however, a few well-ascertained rules which may safely be taught. One, for instance, is that transverse shapes generally tend to lessen height and increase breadth, while longitudinal forms have the opposite effect. Another well-known rule (which I believe is easily explained by a reference to optical science) is the tendency of light colours to increase apparent size, and *vice versa*. People of more than average size should be cautious about wearing white or very light colours for this reason, although it must always be remembered that proportion and colour impress the eye so much more sensibly than mere scale that this rule is a very subordinate one, and only to be applied after those more important subjects have been thoroughly considered. It should, however, be remembered that more than average size necessarily involves a certain degree of conspicuousness, which makes any peculiarity of dress doubly undesirable in such cases. A small person may wear with impunity both colours and shapes which would be inexcusably striking on a large figure. Nothing goes so far to redeem unusual size as complete repose both in form and colour. Much trimming, loose ends and streamers, frills and furbelows, and caprices of all kinds, are apt to become intolerable when magnified, while on a small scale they may please, by a certain fluttering airiness which is in keeping with the impression of a tiny creature. But here also proportion may almost reverse the effect of scale. A short heavy figure may even more imperatively need quietness in dress than one of twice its actual volume which has run up into

slenderness. And this naturally leads me to the second respect in which dress should be adapted to the wearer, namely, character ; which, indeed, is scarcely separable from the form on which it is impressed, and according to which such questions as the last should mainly be decided.

2. *Character.*—It is as hard to draw the line between person and dress as between mind and matter, and there is, perhaps, no form of matter into which, and by which, mind can infuse a more subtle and incalculably radiating influence than it does by and into dress. Dress which is not informed and animated by individual character is to that which truly expresses the mind of the wearer what a dead body is to a living one. This life of dress, individuality, is, perhaps, not quite extinct in any one, being to some extent independent of the will, but all its vigour depends upon the degree in which dress is the result of the real working of the wearer's own mind. It is therefore generally seen in the greatest perfection in the dress of women who are neither very rich nor very poor. Like animal life, it depends for its health upon a due balance of restraint and abundance : wealth overlays it, and poverty cramps it. A woman who has no need to think of the price of her clothes, must have a singularly strong natural tendency to the use of dress as a means of self-expression, if she does not leave a good deal of the arrangement of her toilette to her maid and her dressmaker, merely to save herself trouble ; and the succession of the articles of which her wardrobe is composed is so rapid as to make each one worth much less thought to her than it would be to a woman who expected to spend a longer time within it : and, on the other hand, it is a task beyond ordinary powers to express one's mind fully within the limits of a very narrow purse. On this subject, therefore, great allowances must be made for individual difficulties, and great credit should be given for any clear indication of real inventive power or even of real thought and adaptation. The best advice which can be given to students on this head is that they should never set aside any instinctive preference of their own in regard to particular shapes and colours, unless for a definite assignable reason. As in the choice of wholesome food, inclination is to a person in good health a better guide than any rules of diet, so, in dress, a woman who has a genuine instinctive preference for any particular colour will generally be safe in indulging it in the absence of any distinct reason to the contrary ; and though, no doubt, the free play of individual tastes would at first give rise to a fresh crop of mistakes, yet those very blunders have in them an element of life and progress which is utterly absent in the dull uniformity of merely imitative dress. There is a broad distinction between mistakes prompted by real pleasure in colour, even if uncultivated, and those which are the results of a desire to attract attention, or of mere carelessness ; and we ought to beware lest in our desire to discourage vulgarity we crush the germs of growth by too unrelenting a spirit of criticism. As to the manner of indicating character, that will no doubt be as various as character itself ; but some general correspondences might be pointed out, as, for instance, that between gravity of temperament and

quietness of colouring; and the distinction between the quietness of severity, which, in dress, means cold and hard colours, such as steel grey, black, dark brown, and the quietness of simplicity, represented by the use of primary or very delicate colours—for instance, pure blue, white, or clear soft grey, and the quietness of a balanced and self-controlled character, which seems to me to indicate the fitness of deep full colours, such as violet, deep blue, maroon or crimson. But any colours may be either quiet, or the contrary, according to their quantity and treatment, especially as to trimming. Perhaps the chief point to be observed for obtaining quietness of colouring, is that the trimming should be either of the same colour as the dress, (a difference in shade, great enough to be perceptibly intentional and yet not sufficient to produce an actual contrast, is perhaps the best calculated to give a subdued effect to the whole,) or else in sufficient quantity, and sufficiently mixed ("united," as painters say,) with the colour of the ground, to be almost confounded with it, as is best seen in the case of lace; or else in such a very small quantity as to escape observation, merely producing a sense of finish, and perhaps a slight glow or shade, the cause of which must be sought for to be perceived. But quietness, though it is one of the safest and most inexhaustibly charming characteristics which can belong to dress, is not the only quality which we should wish to see expressed by it. Delicacy, freshness, simplicity, liveliness, elaborateness, sternness, dignity, caprice, cheerfulness, gloom, evenness or variability of temperament—all these and countless other varieties of character and disposition have their appropriate influence on dress—and no toilette is fairly entitled to the praise of individuality which does not distinctly reflect some such quality really characteristic of the wearer.

And here I must give a distinct place to one virtue which at the present time needs to be specially encouraged in dress, namely, truthfulness, which implies an utter contempt for any sort of sham or deceptive imitation whatever. To wear any such things appears to me to be not only in every case to symbolize, but in very many to commit, an act of dishonesty; and whatever may be the practice of a discredibly notorious few, I am sure that the immense though silent majority of English ladies repudiate any such practices with abhorrence—at least in theory. It is of course even more difficult to draw the precise line between truth and falsehood in dress than in language; but there is no need to lay down such precise lines. We all know the difference in ordinary cases, and those who really care to be honest, have not much difficulty in steering clear of the doubtful places. There is but one other virtue against which offences can be actually committed in dress, namely, modesty; and on that subject, also, some means of bringing to bear upon the young and thoughtless the better judgment of older and more cultivated minds might really promote important ends.

8. *Circumstances.*—That dress should be adapted to the circumstances of the wearer is a sufficiently obvious, not to say trite remark, but it is

not only constantly disregarded in practice, but also very insufficiently developed in theory. The wearer's circumstances may be considered under the heads of age, rank, and domestic relations. It is often supposed that care in the choice of dress is appropriate only to the young, or that at most it becomes later in life a painful necessity, and a struggle to lessen as much as possible disfigurements which cannot be repaired. It would lead me too far to attempt to combat this opinion, or even to enumerate the differences in feeling which are implied by a dissent from it. But I may just explain, without attempting to establish, my own view of the way in which the advance of age should affect dress, and modify our attitude with regard to it. At the two ends of life it of course happens, though for different reasons, that dress is a matter in which the wearer is comparatively passive. It is then to a considerable extent the business of other hands ; and at both these times, for this, among other reasons, the great things to be aimed at are freshness and simplicity ; in childhood the simplicity of innocence, and in old age the simplicity of gravity. But at every age a large part of the impression made upon others by any person depends upon his or her dress ; and I do not think that at any age it ought to be a matter of indifference whether that impression is pleasing or otherwise. And it seems to me that the sum of the impressions produced upon the mind through the eye by an aged person, may be as pleasing as that produced upon the mind through the eye by the same person at any other age, although the mere pleasure to the eye itself is no doubt almost always less. This, of course, implies that the balance is redressed by a corresponding increase of beauty of expression in age ; and surely this is often the case,—surely there is in some old countenances a spiritual beauty, and an accumulation of interest in the records of past experience written in their lines, which surpasses any beauty which the same countenances can have exhibited earlier in life. It is true that this is the rarest of all kinds of beauty. I may be mistaken in thinking it also the highest ; it certainly requires some degree of responsive power in the observer for its appreciation ; but to deny its existence would be, I think, to write oneself down blind and insensible. I am, however, in danger of straying from my immediate subject. I have alluded to this beauty only to explain why I should wish to see it reverently attired in garments such as shall harmonize with and not distract the attention from its solemn pathos. To succeed in this is surely worth some thought and care in those on whom the task devolves ; and it is the less difficult since mere beauty in the dress itself becomes gradually more and more unimportant, as complete subordination to the spiritual or intellectual interest of the wearer's countenance gradually absorbs all other considerations. Black, white, and grey are the only tints which seem thoroughly appropriate to the very latest period of life ; and there cannot be much difficulty in arranging these. Besides this process of simplification, the traditions of the wearer's life can hardly fail to have supplied some characteristic and becoming types ; and a slight adherence to these, in disregard of the

progress of fashion, gives at once a graceful touch of quaintness to the costume of an old lady which has a special charm for younger generations.

Perhaps a more discouraging period to deal with is that vaguely called "elderly;" when the obvious beauty of youth has not yet been replaced by the picturesqueness, the cultivated significance, or the pathos of old age. Yet even at this age there is a difference, and an important difference, between a well-dressed and an ill-dressed woman; and the importance of the art of dress may surely quite as reasonably be supposed to vary in a direct, as in an inverse proportion to the difficulty of the problem. That the difficulty of the problem does increase somewhere about the middle period of life, I fully admit. But that very difficulty affords the greatest scope for skill in the choice of those delicate gradations by which a woman may adapt her costume to her years; and the wisdom of such a well-considered and carefully executed adaptation to the facts of the case, instead of any attempt to disguise or ignore them, is evident on the grounds both of morality and policy. If it were only for the sake of the perpetuation of interest which results from the necessity of continual adaptation to a changing position, it would be worth while to recognize the lapse of time; and it is, of course, unnecessary to point out how essential to the moral propriety and dignity of a woman's appearance it is that her dress should be suitable to her age. The general tendency of the alteration of style suitable to middle age is towards elaborateness in trimmings and appointments and richness of materials. Complicated and intricate patterns and trimmings seem to shadow forth the complexity and intricacy which is the distinguishing characteristic of the middle period of life. They also, if well arranged, bear witness to the gradually increasing mastery in the art which has been acquired since the early days, when to plan a simple white dress was enough for the beginner; while, later in life, any such elaborate arrangements would become burdensome or lifeless, and a return to some degree of simplicity naturally accompanies the gradual withdrawal from the multiform activities of middle life. The richness of material, however, which becomes especially suitable when the first youth is passed, need never be laid aside, and indeed seems, in a sense, especially appropriate to those who are no longer exposed to the wear and tear of the busiest years of existence.

Dress also has to be, in some respects, adapted to the social position of the wearer; and on this subject it is very difficult to lay down any very well-defined rules. For there is no saying beforehand what social position any individual may assign to herself; nor is it easy to say exactly what, in the way of dress, is due to any particular assignable rank; still less how the rival claims of rank and wealth ought to be adjusted. But some general principles may be laid down with confidence. One is, that no every-day costume (*i.e.*, no costume which is not avowedly planned with a view to some special festivity) should be such as to be manifestly unsuitable to any company in which the wearer is liable to find herself. A perfect costume for the wife of a London clergyman, for instance, would

be one in which she might receive a visit from a duchess, or pay one to a washerwoman, without disrespect to either. Black silk and white muslin are the typical representatives of the kind of gowns which can hardly be unsuitable in any company. And the same result is always more or less promoted by a dependence for effect rather upon perfection of finish than upon splendour of design. We ought also to encourage by every means the disposition to mark by one's dress the social position which one actually holds rather than the next above it; impressing upon students how much more real respect is due to (for instance) a servant who dresses consistently like a servant, than to one who succeeds (even if by rare good fortune she does succeed now and then) in looking like a lady; showing how impossible it is that any such attempts to assume the appearance of a class above one's own should be consistently carried out in everything, and how peculiarly unladylike is the inevitable failure. The same lesson is fully as much required higher up in the social scale. It would be better, for instance, for a barrister's wife to dress consistently, if only up to the point which might be pronounced suitable for the wife of an attorney, than that she should oscillate between the costumes suitable to the wives of judges and of barristers' clerks respectively. The important truth is that the thing which really gives an impression of refinement and good-breeding is not the particular *pitch* of dress chosen, but the degree in which that pitch, be it what it may, is sustained by perfect finish and "keeping" in every detail. It is obvious that the higher the style aimed at the more difficult and expensive it will be to carry it out in this sustained manner, and therefore the most really refined women in each class will generally be those who pitch their dress lowest for that class,—they having the highest standard of completeness, and the keenest sense of its necessity.

Under the head of domestic relations come all such questions as those respecting the appropriate distinctions between the dress of young ladies before and after their entrance into society, between that of married and unmarried women, and questions respecting mourning and the use of costumes generally. I think that, as a general rule, the more significant dress can be made the better; and I would therefore encourage every attempt to indicate the circumstances of the wearer by appropriate diversities of style. But any sort of costume depends for all its effect upon common consent. The very essence of a conventional symbol is that people should have agreed to attach a particular meaning to its use; and no degree of natural fitness will replace such conventional significations. The effect of costume depends not upon what it ought to mean, but upon what it does mean. We very much want some machinery for taking the sense of the community upon questions of dress, and for suggesting symbols which might with advantage be generally used to signify particular states and conditions of life.

The subject of mourning is one on which there is much to be said, and plausible reasons may be given for or against the whole system. It seems to me natural and inevitable, and to most people's feeling probably

grateful, that there should be some such shelter from the ordinary cares of dress in times of real sorrow, and the adoption of mourning cannot be such a shelter unless it be so strictly conventional as to give no indication of the actual feelings of any individual wearer. But the form which it takes in England is to the last degree troublesome and unreasonable. The addition of so many inches of crape for every degree of affinity is irritatingly absurd. Apart from this, crape itself is a peculiarly bad material for the purpose, from its expensiveness and its liability to injury from every drop of rain. The too common addition of quantities of jet ornaments, or, still worse, of black flowers and other dismal translations of finery into funereal trappings, is both lugubrious and ill-timed, and nobody can think the result really beautiful. To lay aside one's ornaments is the natural symbol of grief, and a relief when the feeling is real. The French plan of signifying "depth" of mourning by increasing the degree of plainness of the simple black dress, and by the absence of ornaments and trimming, seems to me much the most reasonable and appropriate. The period of wearing mourning is considerably shorter than ours. I believe they never wear crape at all, and I cannot see how any one living or dead is the worse for it. The free use of white in all cases of mourning, however deep, would also be a great gain. In hot weather to condemn mourners to the use of heavy black clothes is a mild form of suttee, and should, in common charity, be abolished. But it is too much to expect that individuals should have the courage to break through such customs as these, and there seems no present prospect of any means being provided for united action in such matters. Many suggestions might be made respecting costumes for particular occasions. I will confine myself to one, which seems to me much needed,—I mean a church-going costume. The old simple idea of going to church in one's "Sunday best" had, no doubt, much to recommend it, and in small country churches where each person is familiar with every one else's wardrobe, and the same bonnet and gown does duty week after week for months together, the "Sunday best" really is a sort of church costume; but in great cities it develops into something very different and much less appropriate. A London congregation comes to church dressed very much as if for a flower-show, and the effect is anything but devotional. Good and bad toilettes are alike distracting. Now that we are so busy about the vestments of the officiating clergy, might we not reform the dress of the worshippers? A long black, white, or grey cloak, descending to the ground and worn with a hood of the same material, would be put on in a moment, and would have a very grave and suitable appearance. It would be easier to collect one's thoughts in a church so fitted than in such a scene as we now worship in.

I have said that attention to the three great considerations of personal appearance, character, and circumstances, must be combined with a due regard to time, place, fashion, convenience, and economy. A few words respecting each of these will sum up the rest of what I have to say.

1. *Time*.—There is a vague code, which ought to be better defined, regulating the articles appropriate to morning, afternoon, and evening dress. The morning, of course, should be distinguished by freshness and simplicity, the evening by splendour. It may be almost an unreasonable demand in connection with most ladies, but the sentiment of morning attire appears to me to require that it should, at least in some remote degree, suggest a working dress. For this, as well as for the sake of freshness, as large a proportion as possible of it should consist of what are rather ungrammatically called “washing materials;” and it should at least look as if that part of it were washed every day. In summer, cottons and muslins make it easy to carry this out approximately; in winter, the sentiment must be represented by the collar and sleeves. Some kinds of lace are more or less, and should be stringently, set apart for evening, and some for morning use. But there is room for a good deal more definition in this branch of the subject. One anomaly calls for a passing remark—it is, that the distinction between morning and evening lace is so little regarded in bonnets, probably because they are not considered as meant to be washed. But in their present beautifully simple form what would be prettier or more easily managed than morning bonnets made of muslin and Valenciennes lace, and washed as often as their freshness was in the slightest degree impaired? And how much more ladylike such clean and simple head-dresses would be than the tulle and blonde constructions now too often worn at all hours of the day. The sentiment of evening costume is, I suppose, that it is improvised for the one occasion on which it is worn; and, therefore, no degree of flimsiness or fragility in the materials can offend one's taste, whatever one may think of them in point of economy. The afternoon is a compromise between morning and evening which it is hard to treat philosophically. To dress three times a day seems scarcely worthy of a rational creature, and this is indeed theoretically recognized by the technical use of the word “morning dress” for everything worn before dinner. It would be well if practice were more nearly in accordance with theory in this particular.

The time of year need be noticed only as still further complicating the problem of dress for those who have to think much of expense. It is easy enough to adapt one's clothing to the temperature, if one can afford it. I may mention, however, that some regard is due to other people's eyes as well as one's own feelings, that dress should *look* cool in summer and warm in winter, even if the wearer should be abnormally indifferent to the sensations of heat and cold. Also, when artificial flowers are worn, it is essential that they should be such as are really in season, at least in greenhouses. Under the head of time we have also to consider the question of repetition. It is not only in buying new articles of dress that thought is needed, but in the daily selection of such as shall be worn together, so as to secure enough and not too much variation from day to day. Abrupt changes of the whole costume, or perfectly uniform repetitions of the same

arrangement on successive days, seem to me almost equally undesirable. The most perfect arrangement, I think, is a combination of continuousness with variety by means of alterations of detail, while the foundation remains the same; and when that is changed the transition may be rendered less abrupt by the re-appearance of some familiar ornament, redeeming the new attire from strangeness. Rapid and total changes of dress destroy the web of pleasing associations which time weaves round clothes as well as round other inanimate objects.

2. In the consideration of *place* the distinction between town and country corresponds in some degree to that between morning and evening. In the country there is always a charm in what suggests rural occupations even when it is manifestly only a suggestion. A lady's outdoor dress in the country should always be one in which, if she did milk a cow or make hay, she would be picturesquely and becomingly, even if really unsuitably, dressed for the occasion. Tried by this test, silk and black lace and all sorts of gauzy materials would be condemned, and, I think, rightly, as unsuitable to the country. For the seaside a similar test might be founded upon the possibility of carrying any given costume into a boat. This test would be even more exclusive than the last; and should perhaps be less rigorously applied, though it ought never to be quite lost sight of. Some regard may be had, when it is possible, to the probable surroundings in respect of furniture, &c.; and furniture might be chosen more than is now done with a view to its relations with the dress of its owners; but it is impossible to insist very strictly upon attention to such varying combinations as these.

8. I now come to the vexed and most perplexing question of *fashion*. All theory scouts the dominion of fashion as baseless, while all practice bends to it. To the philosophical mind there is something very irritating in seeing such absolute sway exercised by a power which eludes all inquiry into its source or laws. In more ordinary minds it almost inspires a sort of superstitious awe. Like the Indian chupatties which herald a revolution, it comes nobody knows whence, it spreads nobody knows how, with more than electric rapidity. Those who have made the most energetic attempts to resist its authority know best how certain is their ultimate defeat. I am not going to attempt to reason about this most unreasonable power; only to describe what seems to me to be the right way of regarding it. It is of no use to ignore it; it can hardly be worth any woman's while to resist it; but it need not be allowed to tyrannize everywhere, and it is mere folly for everybody to attempt to keep pace with it. Its proper function seems to me to be like that of rules in a game of skill, to give scope for ingenuity in observing it. Were there no succession of fashions, dress would sink to a mere mechanical repetition of established models. Whether this would be a moral gain or not, it would clearly destroy half the interest of the spectacle. That interest is equally destroyed when mere fashion is allowed to decide everything, as it is in too many instances. You know the fashion, and can, therefore, predict such a one's dress. The real

interest is in watching the variations which may be produced in the dress of a woman who is resolutely harmonious and individual in her own style of dress, by a reference more or less distant to the varying fashions of the day. In such cases the fashion is like an air led by some unknown and invisible performer, but caught up and repeated by a number of instruments, modulated into different keys, and varied into a thousand new creations, while the original air is never lost sight of, nor too widely departed from. Let fashion be thus regarded, and instead of an unmeaning tyranny, it becomes the motive of perpetually renewed interest; and it will, at the same time, become apparent that the very object of consulting the fashion is defeated by too servile an adherence to it on the one hand, or by abortive attempts to follow it on the other. The practical difficulty remains of adjusting the respective limits of fashion and individuality. There are two or three principal considerations by which this adjustment should be influenced. In the first place, the more remote any part of a woman's dress is from her own personality the more completely it may be abandoned to fashion. Thus, the shape and length of a skirt, the choice of a flat trimming which does not alter the outline of the figure, such extraneous adjuncts as muffs, parasols, fans, &c.,—all these things are the mere prey of fashion, and the variations which it may work in them are mostly too remote to disturb the stamp of individuality. But when fashion creeps up to the sleeves, and the cut of the body of a gown, its influence must be more jealously scrutinized—grave individual exigencies may begin to encounter it here; and when it comes to a question of hairdressing, the whole expression of the face being at stake, fashion should be almost the last consideration to be admitted, although, even here, it should never be ignored. Colouring also should always be determined rather by the permanent characteristics of the wearer than by any variations of fashion. Another rule always to be borne in mind is, that personal inclinations rank above fashion. No woman of fine moral sense would wear what she herself felt to be distinctly ugly in mere deference to fashion. Personal inclinations are to fashion what the individual conscience is to public opinion,—much influenced by it, but reacting upon it, and paramount while opposed to it. The eye is so much affected by habit that the sense of ugliness rarely long withstands a very strong current of fashion; and when the sense of ugliness is lost the reason for holding out is gone; but it is almost morally important that as long as it exists it should not be outraged. It can rarely even seem necessary to do so, for there are few fashions which may not be adopted in moderation, and so discreetly adapted to the taste of the wearer as to become fresh sources of beauty. And in the course of its revolutions, fashion every now and then develops really beautiful forms, which it would be well if we could in some way stamp with public approbation, so that they might be saved from the ordinary lot of oblivion.

The last caution which I should wish to impress upon students with regard to fashion is the necessity of taking a sober measurement of the degree in which one really either can or ought to dress fashionably. To

make snatches at occasional fragmentary bits of fashion when one's purse does not allow of the whole wardrobe being kept up consistently to the same degree of novelty, but would amply suffice to keep one neat and fresh in the style of a few weeks or months ago, is simply to throw away the substance for the shadow, and to make one's unavoidable deficiencies doubly glaring. Also, it must be remembered that fashionable dress is as unbecoming in a lady living in a quiet unfashionable society as the attempt to look like a lady is in her housemaid; though it is very likely that she severely condemns the latter error, while she has not strength of mind to refuse her connivance, at least, at her dressmaker's attempts to make her commit the former.

4. In turning to the subject of *convenience*, we emerge from the enchanted grounds where invisible powers exercise their mysterious authority, to the plain light of common sense and reason. That sleeves intended to be worn at meal times should be so constructed as not to dip into dishes; that outdoor gowns should either be short or capable of being shortened; that bodies and skirts, having different periods of existence, and needing to be occasionally packed up, should be separable; that gowns to be put on by human creatures should have their fastenings within reach of the human hand; that hats should be light and shady, parasols for a variable climate large enough to serve as a shelter both from sun and rain; that cloaks should be waterproof, and winter petticoats made of stout coloured stuff instead of white cambric; all these obvious truths have recently dawned upon the minds of this generation, and it is much to be hoped that we shall be able to retain our hold of them. The hope would be more consoling if the records of past fashions did not bear testimony to the extraordinary eclipses which such truths have formerly undergone. In losing sight of them we should lose not only the actual conveniences which they secure to us, but we should be giving up that manifest constructive fitness which, as we all know, is one of the most unfailing guides to the higher kinds of beauty in decorative art. A dress rationally adapted to its purpose would give a certain pleasure to rational creatures even if it were utterly devoid of beauty; but these adaptations are to decorative beauty what trellis-work is to a climbing plant. The ornaments which grow naturally upon them have a charm and a vigour which is unattainable by the pursuit of beauty as a primary object. Beauty, like pleasure, seems to have a mysterious habit of following in the wake of those who are pursuing other objects, while eluding those who turn aside to seek it.

5. All these various considerations—harmony, personal appearance, character, circumstances, time, place, fashion, and convenience,—act upon each other, restricting and promoting and complicating each other in the most incalculable manner, but they are all, like most other human affairs, subject to the last consideration on my list—that of *economy*. All the other ends might be attained by the simple expedient of boundless expenditure; but even were that expedient within the reach of all, there

would be a coarse facility about the use of it which would reduce a noble sport to a mere battue. The whole interest of the pursuit, considered as an art, or at least as a game of skill, would fall to the ground if the contents of all the warehouses of London and Paris were at one's service. Even in that very improbable case there would still be a certain moral value in moderation. But the cases which in any degree approximate to this lie beyond my province. Any sum under 100*l.* a year needs careful management to be made to yield a thoroughly satisfactory crop of clothes. It is perhaps quite as difficult to lay out 100*l.* as 20*l.* a year to the best advantage, though, of course, with the larger sum one is not made to feel the consequences of one's mistakes so long or so grievously. Ordinary mortals, whose pin-money is really limited, be it limits what they may, ought to consider well with themselves in which direction they will economize, and in which they will launch out. Expense may be well bestowed in several distinct, almost opposite, ways. One plan which has its merits is to buy none but the very best—which, unfortunately, are almost invariably the most expensive—materials, on the plea, which we will not handle too roughly, that "they are the most economical in the long run." They are certainly apt to be the most beautiful. The opposite plan of a rapid succession of cheap things has also much to recommend it, (provided the cheap materials be also simple, otherwise cheapness is apt to mean tawdriness,) especially as regards freshness and the facility of keeping pace with the fashion. But this plan would be doubly expensive to any lady who was obliged to have recourse to the services of a dressmaker. Whichever branch of this alternative may be chosen, it is still necessary to consider whether the evening or the morning, the indoor or outdoor costume shall be the first object, for the sake of which the rest of one's wardrobe shall, if necessary, be stinted. This will naturally depend upon one's social habits—that time of day being most carefully provided for when one is most likely to be observed by the friends one most cares to please. I hardly know why it is that there is a certain flavour of propriety and dignity about the earlier hours of the day which makes one feel that a woman who spent her chief care and most of her money on her morning toilettes would occupy a sort of moral pedestal, raised slightly above the level of one whose pride was in her dinner-dresses. And yet even husbands, fathers, and brothers are oftener at leisure to be pleased by dress after the day's work is over than at the breakfast-table, where their attention is at best divided between it and the newspaper. Whatever the full explanation of this sentiment may be, most people certainly feel that the moral respectability of dowdiness is at its minimum in the morning and increases, as the day goes on till it reaches its maximum after dinner—while the indulgence accorded by severe moralists to beauty and freshness of adornment runs an opposite course. Perhaps the instinct of self-preservation warns these censors—who after all are themselves human, and have to provide their own or their families' wardrobes—that good taste does not

allow so much money to be spent on morning as on evening toilettes, and that they are therefore a sort of safety-valve for the ineradicable love of dress inherent in the female mind. A still further subdivision may be made by which the reserve forces are directed upon some particular article of either morning or evening dress, all the rest being done as cheaply as may be, as a mere background for the display of some one favourite vanity. One lady will thus concentrate her efforts upon lace, another upon furs, a third will at all hazards indulge her love of rich silk gowns, a fourth will before everything secure dainty and appropriate garnishings. These specialities naturally arise unconsciously from strong individual tastes, but even where there is not such a natural bias it is worth while to consider whether more may not be effected by some degree of concentration than by the equal distribution of one's forces. Whatever path may ultimately be chosen, whether richness of materials, perpetual renewal of freshness, morning neatness or evening splendour, lace, fur, jewels or trimmings, be made the chief aim, it remains true that no ordinary income can suffice to accomplish them all, and that complete success in any one of these branches generally implies severe self-restraint in the others. What I have already said once or twice about the much greater effect of refinement which is produced by perfect finish of execution than by ambitious design, should be especially borne in mind in making this choice. Far better wear no lace at all than be obliged to eke out a set by the addition of pieces of a different character, or than put it upon inappropriate materials. Far better wear a complete set of bog-oak ornaments than an amethyst brooch with emerald bracelets and pearl earrings. Far better wear a linsey-wolsey gown with carefully chosen and corresponding collars, sleeves, petticoat, gloves, &c., than a rich silk with fragmentary and ill-combined appointments. But this perfect finish is about the most expensive quality that can be aimed at in dress; and it also appeals to a more cultivated taste than we can always reckon upon in spectators.

And with a short appeal to spectators I will conclude my remarks. No art can reach its utmost perfection which is not criticised with discriminating interest, and, at the same time, with a fair share of indulgence. In both these elements we too often fail as spectators. Everybody cannot be always at leisure to observe everybody else's dress: but when we do observe it, and comment upon it, we might at least take the trouble to do so intelligently; to consider the aim and the execution, to do justice to either, if either are good; and to forgive shortcomings in the one for the sake of merit in the other. Let any unprejudiced person run over the list of the topics upon which I have touched, remembering that they are but specimens of the considerations which have to be borne in mind in the choice of clothes, and say whether great indulgence be not due to those who have to reconcile them all without running into debt, or spending upon the matter an amount of time and money which any reasonable woman would be ashamed to spend upon dress. Indeed, as I think over

them all, I am inclined to wonder, not at our failures—hideous and frequent though they be—but at the measure of our success. For want of thought, though the most serious and fundamental, is not the only source of failure ; too much thought may be almost as dangerous and a good deal more embarrassing ; for it may lead to the adoption of a style of dress which is addressed rather to the mind than the eye, and it may meet with criticisms proceeding merely from the eye. Besides, thoughtful people are very apt to get entangled in their own subtleties ; or in avoiding Scylla to fall into Charybdis ; or to reflect till they become desperate and act like fools ; in short, their snares are in proportion to their sensitiveness. What is wanted is the combination of a clear grasp of certain fixed principles, with a knack of execution. And when we remember how rare a combination this is, we shall not be tempted to be too severe upon well-meant, though only partially successful attempts. Anything really pretty and judicious ought to meet with instant and hearty recognition ; a sorrowful silence is punishment enough for most failures. My remarks have been offered partly as aids to thought, but are intended, and I hope will be accepted, also as a plea for indulgence.

Pocket Boroughs.

I HOPE no reader of this Magazine will do me the injustice of supposing that in anything I may chance to say of the ancient representative system of this country any slur is intended upon the great constitutional changes which have been effected in the present century. It is possible, in either writing or talking, to put oneself for the moment in an adversary's place, and to look at things from his point of view, without meaning in the slightest degree to adopt his opinions. Nay, more, it is possible to show the inadequacy of the refutations which have been offered to adverse theories by our own friends without implying that such theories either can not, or ought not to, be refuted. In the present article, however, which is not intended to be political, it is possible that I may lay myself open to misconstruction by those who will not bear in mind the force of the above remarks. That I cannot help. Contented with a general assertion that I do *not* want to bring back again Grampound, Gatton, and Old Sarum, I proceed with an easy mind to say what I have to say both about the past history and the present condition of Pocket Boroughs.

There is a kind of poetry about these grass-grown relics just as there is about a Tintern Abbey or a Chepstow Castle. They are monuments of a system which, though we have no desire to restore it, was undeniably a grand one in its day. These mouldering old streets were to the aristocracy of a later period what feudal towers and armed retainers had been to the aristocracy of an earlier. And most men now admit that with all its backslidings and corruptions, the eighteenth century was a splendid part of English history. There is a solid, square-cut, Roman grandeur, if not unmixed with a certain Roman coarseness, about all the doings of that period which is perhaps more exclusively English than the grace, the spirituality, and the enthusiasm of the seventeenth century. These last-mentioned qualities are seen in connection with events which formed part of the history of Europe, while the former were coincident with events peculiar to the history of England. The virtues and vices evoked by the Reformation, by the revival of letters, by the growth of loyalty, the moral substitute for mediæval chivalry, were common to all the nations of the Continent. But the English revolution was unique. No other nation has succeeded in imitating that. And it was only, therefore, reasonable to expect that the national character and national exploits, as manifested under the *régime* which that revolution established, should exhibit colours of their own not previously developed; or not to an equal extent. We may reach the same result from another point of view.

In the fourteenth century England was a member of one great political organization which extended all over Europe, and she naturally bore a strong family likeness to her feudal sisters. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, she was one of a large group of monarchies all fashioned, as it seemed, upon the same principles, and certainly all worked through the medium of the same class of sentiments. But during the intervening period England was pre-eminently insular. In the nineteenth century, again, owing partly to the establishment of representative institutions on the Continent, partly to the reform of our own institutions at home, partly to the press and the steam-engine, England has replaced herself *en rapport* with the political feeling of other countries to an extent unknown since the Stuarts. With the beginning of the eighteenth century she may be said to have parted company from the old European society. She had then, for the first time, a political constitution which, as it sprang from internal causes peculiar to herself, had no counterpart abroad, and at once drew a marked line of demarcation between herself and all the rest of the world.

What it was that the old aristocratic system did for this empire has been so ably and eloquently described by a valued contributor to this Magazine, that I shall venture no more than this passing allusion to it, merely to show that I am not without good liberal authority in speaking of the "grandeur" of that period. And hence it follows that whatever was an integral part of that period, whatever contributed to the support of that stately edifice, or to the authority of those men of might whose wisdom and valour have adorned it, becomes invested with something more than a merely antiquarian interest in the eyes of any man who can look beyond the passing moment. Now it is needless to say that the period which intervened between the Revolution and the Reform Bill was the period *par excellence* of pocket boroughs. They reached their meridian glories early in the reign of George III., and shone with undiminished lustre down to the reign of his degenerate successor. Then came the fatal shock, since which they have been rapidly losing ground every day; till they have fallen, alas! into a now dishonoured old age, and promise ere long to disappear into the limbo whither fines and recoveries, flint and steel guns, old leisure, and mixed punch await their ancient comrades. Not but what, in point of numbers, they still maintain a decent front. But the red line is very thin, and even from this the vital principle has departed. The greatest man in England could not now bequeath his interest in a borough to his heir, as he could do in the good old times. Moreover, it is not with the survivors that my present business lies. They stand at present, each protected by its own prickly fence of political thorns and briars, to keep off the wild boars of Birmingham, Manchester, and Finsbury; and with these I do not care to meddle. But we can examine one or two of those which the beasts of the forest did once succeed in ravaging without either scratching our fingers or losing our temper.

Of the old borough system, then, as a recognized institution of the

country, and as it flourished throughout the aristocratic, distinct both from the feudal and from the monarchical, period of English history, we may consider that the doom is signed. But what *was* that system? What *was* it really understood to mean by the people themselves? Was it a fraudulent appropriation of popular rights, disguised under popular forms, or was it not? Was the Reform Bill the creation of a new constitution, or merely a return to the old one? I put these questions because upon the right answer to them depends the nature of the interest which we derive from contemplating the ruins of ancient boroughs. Nor need the inquiry involve us in anything like a political discussion. If the change in 1832 was a good one, it really cannot signify one straw by what name men call it. But I believe that the Reformers of that period laid themselves open to very damaging retorts when they professed to think that Schedules A. and B. were only a restoration of the ancient constitution of this country. And, more than that, the argument did no good, for it never convinced their opponents, although these, it is curious to observe, either did not see, or thought it impolitic to avow, the right answer. The real truth was that, in 1832, we wanted, not a restoration, but an extension; not something old, but something new. And what we wanted we got. But it was idle to pretend that we were readjusting our institutions by the model of the thirteenth century, as was pretended by writers and speakers then, and as has not uncommonly been supposed to have been the case since. The explanation of the error is quite simple. Men saw, or thought they saw, that nomination boroughs did not exist in the days of the Plantagenets, and that writs were only issued to populous and important places. And they argued, accordingly, that to transfer the franchise from boroughs which were decayed, corrupt, and servile, to towns which were prosperous and independent, was to restore the ancient constitution. And so it would have been had all the other conditions of the problem remained the same. But they had not. The House of Commons in the reign of George IV. was as different from the House of Commons in the reign of Henry VI. as the barons who extorted Magna Charta from the barons who accepted the Reform Bill. The free electors of the fifteenth century returned men to Parliament whose business was confined to voting money. The obsequious electors of the eighteenth century returned men to Parliament whose business was to govern the empire. Here was the essential difference, which has so constantly been overlooked. "If you want," the Tories might have said, "to restore the ancient constitution, well and good. But, in that case, with the old freedom of election, you must re-impose the old limits upon the functions of the House of Commons." And such a retort would have been logically fatal; for, whether we regard the House of Commons during the feudal period, during the kingly period, or during the modern aristocratic period, we shall look in vain for any time when it united with the freedom of election which is said to have prevailed under the Edwards the political

power which it certainly possessed under the Georges. Step by step, as the powers of that House increased, the influence exercised over it by other forces in the country increased too. As the House of Commons gradually aspired to rule the nation, first the Crown and then the aristocracy resolved to rule the House of Commons. By one means or another power was to be kept in the old hands. When it came to a fight in the seventeenth century between the Crown and the aristocracy, the aristocracy used the House of Commons against the king, and, in the end, succeeded in their object. But that assembly then found itself in the position of the stag in the fable.

Non equitem dorso, non frenum depulit ore.

Still the usurpation we say was, after all, merely nominal. The power which the aristocracy was now enabled to exercise, through the House of Commons, either they or the Crown had always exercised in some way. Neither the House of Commons nor the people had lost anything through the introduction of the nomination system, because they had nothing to lose. The people gained a great deal by the Reform Bill of 1832, from which they had been improperly excluded. But they did not recover anything of which they had previously been robbed. And this distinction, as will be seen hereafter, has a direct bearing not only on the political but also on the social aspect of the old boroughs with which we are at present concerned.

I have, indeed, put the case, so far, rather *too* favourably for the feudal period. It is true that before the battle of Bosworth the elections were left tolerably free, because there was no systematic attempt to interfere with the old principle that taxation and representation should go together; and taxation was the only branch of Government which the Commons affected to control. But even at this early period, according to Mr. Hallam, the Crown was in the habit of creating boroughs, in order to serve a temporary purpose—either to secure a Parliament devoted to its policy for the time, or to gratify powerful personages who possessed interest in the neighbourhood. And it is thus that he accounts for the existence of numerous “ancient boroughs” before the Reform Bill, which could “*at no period* have possessed sufficient importance to deserve the elective franchise on the score of their riches or population.”

Thus we are not to suppose that all those village boroughs which figured in Schedule A. had necessarily been, at some remote period, populous and flourishing towns. Thus, too, we are relieved from a two-fold perplexity, which is sure to seize upon the mind as it contemplates a Brackley, a Bedwyn, or a Chipping Norton—how, namely, they ever *could* have been places of any great consequence, and why, if they ever were so, they should have sunk to what they now are. No extinct industry has receded from their borders, and left them high and dry to rot. Few of them could have been places of any great military importance. Many of them are not even upon the main highways. No, we may depend upon it

that the majority of such small boroughs were always small boroughs, owing their fitness for the franchise either to the favour of some neighbouring potentate; or to their ascertained willingness to return a Court candidate to Parliament. The system which was abolished one generation back was substantially the same system that flourished five centuries ago. The wheels and the wires were pretty much what they always had been. It was the machine itself that had grown obsolete. And the effect of this conviction is to invest, with quite a new kind of interest, the grey hairs of Grampound and Higham Ferrers.

After the accession of the Tudors, when the Crown and the Commons both acquired new powers from the destruction of the old nobility, the influence of the Crown became, if not more general, at least more conspicuous and decisive. When a new Parliament was to be summoned writs were issued or withheld according to the known tendencies of the inhabitants; and in the reign of Charles I. it became necessary for the "country party," as they were called, to offer a vigorous resistance to this practice, which must have ended in making the House of Commons purely the creature of the sovereign, as it afterwards became of the aristocracy. One of the earliest achievements of Hampden was to procure the restitution of the franchise to the town of Wendover and some others, to which the Government had omitted to direct writs, because of their known antagonism to the Court. In the third period, *i.e.*, after the Revolution, the history of our representative system is well known. And I need not pursue this branch of our inquiry any further. The only reason why I have pursued it so far as this is that my readers might be in a condition to sympathize while I muse amid the ruins of Carthage. Gazing upon some of the by no means even large villages, which forty years ago returned two members to Parliament, and were then, we have been assured, even less populous than they are now, one is driven to ask oneself whether it was possible that the English people could have been gulled by any such transparent imposture as that which dignified the process of election at these places with the title of popular representation? My own belief is they never were. My firm conviction is that the system in question was generally understood to be what it really was—a rather clumsy and demoralizing, but nevertheless practical, mode of giving effect to aristocratic government. There was tall talk upon the subject, no doubt, chiefly among orators who, being excluded from office, took it out in tall talk. But really it is too childish to suppose that any of the great statesmen, Whig or Tory, of the eighteenth century, from Bolingbroke to Charles Fox, really believed one word of what they said about the ultimate tribunal of the people.

I am now in a position to invite the reader's attention to one or two of those venerable and picturesque villages which in former days were the pride of a profligate aristocracy; but which now, like cast-off mistresses reduced to indigence, have taken to small shops and public-houses, and eke out a precarious subsistence by the sale of beer or lollipops. A

certain prince that we all know of desires the swallow to tell his lady love that—

Fair and false and fickle is the south,
But dark and true and tender is the north.

This remarkable observation, however, is not applicable to the political division of England. The "tender and true" in politics has certainly been found rather in the south than in the north of this island. There was the stronghold of the cavalier, and there linger still the last traces of the "old regime," among the brave old boroughs of Wiltshire. Shorn of their strength is this gallant regiment now. Here and there a soldier of the old guard still bears himself bravely as one who did not know that the hand of progress was upon him; and in close boroughs, if anywhere, *noblesse oblige* in several senses of the word, and we doubt not they will die hard. Our business, however, as we have already stated, is not with the living, but with the dead. The south and west of England is the great district for these interesting remains, as it is for the remains of Druidism. And it is here that I have seen those which struck my fancy most. In the north-west corner of one of those sequestered shires, in which ancient manners and modes of thought still to some extent survive, which has only recently been pierced by a railway, and where the roads between the villages are still in bad weather impassable, at a distance of about twenty miles apart, repose two of these fallen angels, whose present squalor contrasts most distressingly with the guilty splendour of the past. Not that they were ever, as far as I could make out, more extensive, or even *much* more populous than they are at present. But once they were, so to speak, clad in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously, if not every day, a good number of days in the year. They boasted the dignity of mayors and corporations, they had civic revels in their houses, and barrels of ale in all their streets. They had large and prosperous inns, where their courtly representatives, real gentlemen generally, and none of your plaster and stucco, actually dined, drank, and toasted no doubt the immortal British Constitution; and what are they now?—clay, a little clay. The feasts are over; the ale is drunk out; the halo which surrounded the mayor, and the members, and the processions, and the four white horses, is extinct; and a few rows of mud cottages, and here and there a tawdry public-house alone survive to tell us what Pocket Boroughs once were.

The two that I am now thinking of are, nevertheless, very unlike each other. One is, indeed, the very picture of desolation; and I strongly recommend it to any one who wants to see an old pocket borough in perfection. As you enter it at one end you pass along a row of ruinous ragged-looking houses, without either roofs or windows, terminating in a few squeezed-up mud hovels which appear to be inhabited. Turning to the right into the main street of the borough, you find a wide straggling road, with a large pond on one side of it, two or three rusty-looking shops, a farm-house, one genteel cottage, a dead-wall, a stone cross, and two

immense inns, looking as if they could have accommodated easily all the gentlefolks of the county, and their servants and carriages to boot. It was these inns which afflicted me with the deepest melancholy. There they stood, slipshod, shabby, and frowzy, without a shred of self-respect left, like some boozy spendthrift, far along the road to grief, whom you remember but a brief time back florid, lavish, hospitable. If you go in to eat and drink, you will probably come out to rail; and it will be better, therefore, to confine yourself to somewhat less material entertainment. I myself was wroth for a moment as the doors of the "Talbot Hotel" creaked sulkily behind me; but on brief reflection I confessed the unreasonableness of my anger. Had I not entered to do homage to the *genius loci*; to sit where great wits had sat; and to repeople the old rooms, and the street in front of the windows, with all the humours of Hogarth; nay, more than this, to philosophize on political institutions, and to chew the cud of the romances which such scenes invariably suggest to one? And had I not carried away with me something far better than beer; something which mine hostess knew not how to charge for, or doubtless she would have put it in the bill? By getting wet through, I had gained an opportunity of inspecting the state bed-chambers. Here was magnificence, clearly testifying to the past glories of this now degraded tavern: large rooms, huge four-posters, good fire-places, and walls hung with prints of by no means a contemptible character. Here, thought I, we tread more closely on the past than we have yet trodden. Here, doubtless, under these very coverlets, has lain many a goodly gentleman,—true toper and pious Tory, who poured not libations to his gods of that which cost him nothing. Here have been carried in due form proposers and seconders, and most likely principals as well; to sleep two or three in a bed the sleep of the just; and to wake next morning with red eyes beneath their rumpled wigs, and bellow to the drowsy servitors for small-beer and a barber. Here, in this room, must have been heard full often that wit which was the delight of St. James's, and those diseased ravings which had nearly given London to the flames. And here, too, the famous old general of Queen Anne may have fought his battles over again, and snorted out curses on the hero who had tried to rob him of his glory. "All these, and more, came flocking" as I contemplated the roomy couches and the spacious chambers of our inn, and this was the picture which I carried away in the mind's eye, and held to be more than an equivalent for very indifferent accommodation.

In spite of all unpleasant incidents and depressing external phenomena, my predominating sensation was one of reverence. In every ill-clad, grey-haired labourer that passed me, imagination saw a possible "pot-whalloper," as, sixty years ago, in every threadbare foreigner in the Strand you might have pushed against a French marquis. The associations of the place triumphed over its existing aspect. And by the time I got to the further end of the long wide straggling street I was quite in a mood to do homage to the two lions which there seemed to bow one out of the village.

One was the ruin of an old castle which had known, in succession, the Mandevilles, the Cliffords, and the Nevills, the other was a fragment of wall which had formed part of the library of George Selwyn. Of the castle but a few grass-grown blocks of stones are still left. But they lie pleasantly among some old trees, just on the outskirts of the town, and between them and the main street which it fronts at right angles stood the house of the famous old wit to whom one-half of the borough once belonged. The site of it is now bare, but the situation of the library is still pointed out to the curious, from the windows of which the owner could command an uninterrupted view of his property, and observe the humours of his constituents. There can hardly be a better illustration of the history of our small boroughs, which we have already sketched, than this immediate proximity of the residence of the borough proprietor to the castle of the feudal lord: and now both in ruins. The various phases through which such boroughs have passed are here perfectly represented. Selwyn found the use of his; for in the general election of 1780 he was defeated at Gloucester, which he had represented in several Parliaments, and was fain to take refuge in one of those asylums for genius which the constitution then so liberally provided. He died in 1791, and by his will left all his property to his nephew, Lord Sydney, and with it his interest in one-half of the borough of Ludgershall.

The other half of the borough belonged at one time to General Webb, the hero of Blenheim, who figures so conspicuously in *Esmond*. He lived at Biddenden House, about two miles from the town, and this property, together with the borough interest, was purchased from his descendants, near the close of the last century, by the Everett family, who still possess the estate. General Webb occupied the seat himself in several Parliaments; and among the nominees of his successors was the famous Lord George Gordon, who was Selwyn's colleague.

Ludgershall, as I have shown, does seem to have suffered something from the loss of its political importance, though that something cannot have been much. But there are no such signs in the next place upon our list. A village it is, and a village it always must have been. It lies snugly and compactly built on the slope of a gentle declivity, with a southern aspect, suggestive of fine old apricot-trees spreading over lichen-covered walls, surrounding large old-fashioned gardens. The country all round it is extremely pretty, thickly wooded with oak and beech, and fenced in from the outer world by the long ridges of the Wiltshire Downs—a borough that might almost have been preserved in a glass-case,—as cozy a little nest as ever a storm-tossed politician could wish to retire to in his age. This diminutive member of our ancient political system boasts, however, one feature of grandeur in which many of its larger brethren are deficient. It has a veritable town hall. This quaint little edifice, rather smaller than a travelling showman's van, is perched up on four little stone pillars, like a corn-rick, and stands in an open space, in the centre of the borough, still an object of tender pride with the ancient inhabitants of the

place. Before the Reform Bill the hustings, forsooth, used to be erected against its sides, and from these the candidates for election addressed the free and independent electors of Great Bodwyn. Afterwards it was turned into the village school. And finally, when it became dangerous to ascend the frail wooden stairs which had been worn by such a long succession of noble and knightly footsteps, it was abandoned to the hand of time. The ancient records of the corporation (heaven help us!) have been removed elsewhere, and would probably furnish very pretty reading for a lover of political antiquities like the present writer. But with a sight of these treasures mine eyes have not as yet been blessed. I and the friend in whose company I visited this spot encountered an old man who remembered the election business well, and had himself borne part in it. He told us how he used to go out with his father to meet the procession of the candidates which came in from the neighbouring great house, with all the pomps and glories of the old *régime*, flags flying, bands playing, and the candidates bowing right and left to an enthusiastic mob of forty persons.

Noverat ille

Luxuriam imperii veterem noctesque Neronis.

He remembered the barrols of beer rolling about the town street, almost as if they had been human: the open table that was kept for all alike at the inferior public-houses, and the stately banquets to which the quality sat down at the principal hotel, not an over-grown building, such as we have recently described, but a nice little county inn, where they still brew good beer. For Bodwyn, we observed, did not seem to have deteriorated since it had exchanged its old vicious mode of life for one of obscure but honest industry. The shops, we were told, were now more numerous and better than before. The population had increased. The liquor too, wondrous to relate, did not seem to have degenerated. There was none of that depressing air about the whole place which characterized the other. It wore a smiling and contented look, as if virtue agreed with it: the difference, we suppose, being traceable, as moralists would tell us, to a better temperament at bottom, such as comes purified through the fire of adversity, whereas worse natures are merely charred and blackened by it. Our cicerone informed us that his native town had numbered fifteen "vote houses," as they used to be called, which are, we suppose, the "ancient burghage messuages," and at the beginning of this century it seems to have contained about sixty or seventy other voters. What amused us as much as anything was, that he did not seem to have the least conception that the disfranchisement of his old borough had been part of any general scheme of reform affecting the entire nation. He attributed it to a local intrigue; and spoke mysteriously of a certain Doctor, who was at feud with the authorities, and used "to go up and down to Lunnon, along of it," till the grievance was taken up by Government, and he got the borough disfranchised in order to spite the mayor. This place was one of the oldest boroughs in the kingdom, having sent members to

Parliament in the twenty-third year of Edward I. But to what influence this distinction was due I cannot tell. Whether any light is thrown upon the question by another piece of information which we gleaned from the same source, I should not like to say. Our guide showed us over the church, and pointed out a recumbent stone figure in one of the transepts which he said nobody could make out. He stated, however, that there "were a good many kings about in they days," and this was supposed to be "one of his warriors," adding cautiously, but simply, that "it was some years back." What period of time was represented to his own mind by "they days," or what degree of proximity was signified by the word "about," we failed to discover; while to allude to the heptarchy as having existed some years back, would have been considered an inaccurate mode of speaking, we should think, even in the days of William the Conqueror. It is possible, indeed, that the Reform Bill had affected this man's intellects so as to have destroyed in him altogether the ideas of space and time. But after all the best judges could only tell us that the effigy was supposed to be as old as the thirteenth century, and to represent a great feudal proprietor in the neighbourhood. It is not therefore beyond the bounds of possibility that in the fine old parish church lies the first founder of the borough, who must surely have been startled out of his long sleep by the echoes of the guns which told an eager nation that the "ancient régime" was dead.

A collection of anecdotes illustrating the customs and traditions of the old boroughs might be made to fill volumes. But one thing the reader should remember, namely, that pocket boroughs and rotten boroughs were not convertible terms. A borough-monger might possess either the actual fee-simple of a small town, or merely its political interest. In the former case, of course, his influence was supreme and bribery superfluous. In the latter, it seems to have been usual to pay the voters a certain fixed sum at each election. In one Wiltshire borough the twelve electors who constituted the corporation used to dine together as often as they had to choose a member; and before dinner each man bound himself, by the most solemn oath, to exercise a free and conscientious choice. It is very likely that none of them were really guilty of perjury, though they all knew beforehand that under every one of the twelve cheese-plates which were placed upon the table would be found a fifty-pound note.

The case of Old Sarum is a very peculiar one. This place used always to be quoted as one of the most flagrant examples of the absurdity of the old system, and any allusion to the one inhabitant of that ancient borough, who was supposed to return its two members, was always thought a good joke. But the fact is, that, till about 120 years ago, there was not even one inhabitant of Old Sarum; and I remember being puzzled at first how to reconcile this fact with the record of "contested elections" which occurred there in the reign of Charles II., and again in the reign of Queen Anne. But on examining the point one sees that these were cases rather of disputed returns than of contests in the modern sense. Not but what

there were materials for even these. It did not follow in those days that because there were no residents, therefore there were no voters. And on the site of Old Sarum still flourished fourteen freeholders, who were likewise "burgage holders," and who met periodically under the "Election Elm"—a tree which I regarded with veneration—to choose their representatives in Parliament. Sarum *had* once been a place of great importance. Its castle was one of the chief barriers of the south-west against the incursions of the Welsh; and before the removal of its cathedral into the valley where it now stands, it must have been one of the finest cities in the kingdom. But when no longer required as a military post, it is easy to see that its inaccessible position, on the summit of a very steep and very lofty hill, would soon lead to its desertion. But as early as the reign of Henry VIII. the old town was in ruins, and not a single house in it inhabited. And we may suppose that by the end of the seventeenth century it had become just the bare mound that it is at present. About the middle of the eighteenth century the Pitt family, who were lords of the manor, and had estates in the adjoining village of Stratford, built the solitary house to which we have already referred. It was at first merely a shepherd's hut, and afterwards became a public-house. I could not understand what electioneering object was to be gained by the erection of this tenement. But some such object is alleged to have been at the bottom of it. It could hardly have been that the Pitt family intended by it to wipe off the reproach of a borough without an inhabitant, and representatives without constituents. To build *one* house for such a purpose was only to make the scandal more conspicuous. However, a proprietor with a strong sense of humour might perhaps have done it for the joke's sake. It is curious that there is no intermission of any consequence in the issue of writs to Old Sarum. It never seems to have struck any one till near the time of the Reform Bill, that there was anything at all odd in requiring two members to be returned to the House of Commons for a naked green hill tenanted exclusively by sheep. And this apparent blindness to what we now call a glaring abuse, is to my mind a strong confirmation of the views I have already expressed—in the eyes of men who regarded our scheme of representation simply as the recognized machines for giving effect to aristocratic government, Old Sarum was no abuse. The grandfather of the first Lord Chatham, who had been governor of Madras and was known as Governor Pitt, invested his Indian fortune in rotten boroughs, and Old Sarum was one of his purchases. His son Robert represented it in several parliaments. And in 1784, when his eldest son, Thomas, who had been returned for both Old Sarum and Oakhampton, elected to sit for the latter, his younger son William, the terrible count, became member for the former.

It is not until one has visited in the flesh two such places as we have here described that one can realize to its full extent the "anomalies" of the old system. We read in Macaulay's swinging style that "towns had dwindled into villages, villages had expanded into towns." But when you

actually see the villages in question, you feel that never until that moment had these words made an adequate impression. Such generalisations are of course very vague. Town and village are comparative terms; and by themselves would never teach one to suspect the existence of such places. Men had heard, indeed, of Old Sarum, but then, even in the pre-Reform era, Old Sarum was admitted to be monstrous; and one would not necessarily infer from the condition of Old Sarum the condition of Ludgershall and Bedwyn. Standing in the centre of the quiet street, in the midst of a population certainly not exceeding one thousand, if it equal that; surrounded by the familiar objects which have all our lives long been associated exclusively with an ordinary country village—not the village of fiction, mind, but the village of real life, with its half-dozen farmers, its two shops, its one clergyman, and its third or fourth share in a squire—surrounded, I say, by hay-ricks and corn-ricks, by cows coming in to be milked, by the horses going down to water; by the women sitting working on their doorsteps; by the beehives in the little cottage gardens; by the old well in one corner, and possibly the old stocks in another; and breathing all the time that pleasant, drowsy, humming atmosphere which belongs to such places in the summer time; one does at length feel, with overpowering force, that England must indeed be a practical nation to have looked on so long without a murmur, while towns of this magnitude returned a fourth of the representatives of England and Wales; and Leeds, Manchester, and Birmingham returned not one. A partial explanation of it is that Macaulay is wrong as usual in one branch of his generalisation. It is incorrect, as already stated, to speak of these bantam boroughs as “towns which had dwindled into villages.” They had never been towns at all. They had always been what they then were; and they were tolerated so long because the nation felt by instinct that they did represent a principle; and if they represented nothing else, as the wage of the period used to say,—why, so much the better for the principle. Men could not have reasoned this out. But they felt it all the same for that. Only when told that the days of that principle were numbered, that itself was obsolete, and that it was time to rise up and shake it off, for the sake of establishing a form of Government better suited to the age, they responded eagerly to the call. But they rose to vindicate new rights and powers, and not to recover lost ones.



"I AM GOING TO HARRY"

The Stockbroker at Dinglewood.

CHAPTER I.



THOSE who saw Dinglewood only after the improvements had been made could scarcely be able to form to themselves any idea of what it was before the Greshams came. I call them improvements because everybody used the word; but I cannot say I thought the house improved. It was an old-fashioned red-brick house, nothing to speak of architecturally—in the style of Kensington Palace and Kew, and the rest of those old homely royal houses. The drawing-room opened its tall narrow windows upon a little terrace, which was very green and grassy, and pleasant. I should be sorry to undertake to say why it was called

Dinglewood. Mr. Coventry made very merry over the name when he had it. He used to say it was because there were no trees; but that was not strictly the case. It was quite open and bare, it is true, towards the river, which we could not see from the Green; but there was a little grove of trees which interposed between us and the house, as if to shut out Dinglewood from the vulgarity of neighbours. It was a popular house in a quiet way when the Coventrys were there. They did not give parties, or pretend to take much trouble in the way of society, for Lady Sarah was always delicate; but when we were tired with our view on the Green, and our lawns and trees, we were always welcome on the Dinglewood terrace, where the old people were constantly to be found sitting out in the summer afternoons, Lady Sarah on her sofa, and Mr. Coventry with the newspapers and his great dog. The lawn went sloping down towards the river, which lay still and white under the sunshine, with a little green island, and a little grey house making a centre to the picture. As long as the sloping bank was lawn it was closely cut and kept like velvet; but when it became field these niceties stopped, and Lady Sarah's pet Alderney stood up to her knees in the cool clover. There was an old mulberry-

tree close to the wall of the house, which shaded the sofa ; and a gloomy yew on the other side did the same thing for Mr. Coventry, who was an old Indian and a salamander, and could bear any amount of sunshine. Lady Sarah's perpetual occupation was knitting. She knitted all sorts of bright-coloured things in brilliant German wool with big ivory pins, and her husband used to read the news to her. They read all the debates together, stopping every now and then to exchange their sentiments. Lady Sarah would say with her brisk little voice, " He might have made a better point there. I don't see that he proves his case. I don't agree with that ;" and Mr. Coventry would stop and lay down the paper on his knees, and discuss it leisurely. There was no reason why they should not do it at their leisure. The best part of the summer days were spent thus by the old couple ; and the sunshine lay warm and still round them, and the leaves rustled softly, and the cool grass kept growing under their peaceful old feet. These feet tread mortal soil no longer, and all this has nothing in the world to do with my story. But it was a pretty sight in its way. They were not rich, and the furniture and carpets were very faded, and everything very different from what it came to be afterwards ; yet we were all very fond of Mr. Coventry and his pretty old wife, and the old-fashioned house was appropriate to them. I like to think of them even now.

We were all anxious, of course, after Mr. Coventry's death, to know who would buy the house ; (Lady Sarah could not bear it after he was gone, and, indeed, lived only a year after him,) and when it was known that young Mr. Gresham was the purchaser, it made quite a sensation on the Green. He was the son of old Gresham, who had bought Bishop's Hope, a noble place at Cookesley, about a dozen miles off, but had made all his fortune as a stockbroker, and, they say, not even the best kind of that. His son had succeeded him in business, and had lately married somebody in his own class. He was a nice-looking young fellow enough, and had been brought up at Eton, to be sure, like so many of those people's sons ; but still one felt that it was bringing in a new element to the Green. If his wife had been, as so often happens, a gentlewoman, it would have made things comparatively easy. But she was only the daughter of a mercantile man like himself, and there was great discussion among us as to what we should do when they came. Some families made up their minds at once not to call ; and some, on the other hand, declared that such rich people were sure to *fêter* the whole county, and that everybody would go to them. " If they had only been a little rich, it would never have answered ; but they are frightfully rich, and, of course, we must all go down on our knees," Lottie Stoke said. She was the most eager of all to know them ; for her youth was passing away, and she was not likely to marry, and the Stokes were poor. I confess I was curious myself to see how things would turn out.

Their first step, however, was one which took us all by surprise. Young Gresham dashed over in his Yankee waggon from Cookesley to go over the house, and the same day a charming barouche made the tour of the

Green, with a very pretty young woman in it, and a lovely little girl, and a matchless tiny Skye terrier—all going to inspect Dinglewood. The arms on the carriage were quartered to the last possibility of quartering, as if they had come through generations of heiresses and gentlemen of coat-armour, and the footman was powdered and dazzling to behold. Altogether it was by far the finest equipage that had been seen in these parts for a long time. Not to speak of Lady Denzil's, or the other great people about, her Majesty's own carriage, that she drives about the neighbourhood in, was not to be compared to it. Its emblazoned panels brushed against the privet hedges in poor old Lady Sarah's drive, which was only wide enough for her little pony-carriage, and I have no doubt were scratched and spoiled; but the next thing we heard about Dinglewood was that a flood of workmen had come down upon it, and that everything was to be changed. Young Mrs. Gresham liked the situation, but the house was far too small for her. My maid told me a new dining-room and drawing-room, with bed-rooms over, were to be added, and already the people had set to work. We all looked on thunderstruck while these "improvements" were going on: he had a right to do it, no doubt, as he had bought it, but still it did seem a great piece of presumption. The pretty terrace was all cut up, and the poor old mulberry-tree perished in the changes, though it is true that they had the sense not to spoil the view. They added two wings to the old house, with one sumptuous room in each. Poor Lady Sarah's drawing-room, which was good enough for her, these millionaires made into a billiard-room, and put them all *en suite*, making a passage thus between their two new wings. I don't deny, as I have already said, that they had a perfect right to do it; but all the same it was very odd to us.

And then heaps of new furniture came down from town; the waggons that brought it made quite a procession along the road. All this grandeur and display had a bad effect upon the neighbourhood. It really looked as if these new people were already crowing over us, whose carpets and hangings were a little faded and out of fashion. There was a general movement of indignation on the Green. All this expense might be well enough, for those who could afford it, in a town-house, people said, but in the country it was vulgar and stupid. Everything was gilded and ornamented and expensive in the new Dinglewood; Turkey carpets all over the house, and rich silk curtains and immense mirrors. Then after a while "the family" arrived. They came with such a flutter of fine carriages as had never been seen before among us. The drive had been widened, down which Lady Sarah's old grey pony used to jog so comfortably, and there was nothing to be seen all day long but smooth, shining panels and high-stepping horses whisking in and out. In the first place there was Mr. Gresham's Yankee waggon, with a wicked-looking beast in it, which went like the wind. Then there would be a cosy brougham carrying Mrs. Gresham to Shoreton shopping, or taking out the nurse and baby for an airing; and after lunch came the

pretty open carriage with the armorial bearings and the man in powder. We were too indignant to look round at first when these vehicles passed ; but custom does a great deal, and one's feelings soften in spite of one's self. Of all the people on the Green, Lottie Stoke was the one who did most for the new people. "I mean to make mamma call," she said : and she even made a round of visits for the purpose of saying it. "Why shouldn't we all call on them ? I think it is mean to object to them for being rich. It looks as if we were ashamed of being poor ; and they are sure to have quantities of people from town, and to enjoy themselves—people as good as we are, Mrs. Mulgrave : they are not so particular in London."

"My dear Lottie," said I, "I have no doubt the Greshams themselves are quite as good as we are. That is not the question. There are social differences, you know."

"Oh, yes ! I know," cried Lottie ; "I have heard of them all my life, but I don't see what the better we are, for all our nicety ; and I mean to make mamma call."

She was not so good as her word however, for Mrs. Stoke was a timid woman, and waited to see what other people would do. And in the meantime the Greshams themselves, independent of their fine house and their showy carriages, presented themselves, as it were, before us for approval. They walked to church on Sunday without any show, which made quite a revulsion in their favour ; and she was very pretty and sweet-looking, and he was so like a gentleman that you could never have told the difference. And the end of it all was, that one fine morning Lady Denzil, without saying a word to any one, called ; and after that, everybody on the Green.

I do not pretend to say that there was not a little air of newness about these young people. They were like their house, a little too bright, too costly, too luxurious. Mrs. Gresham gave herself now and then pretty little airs of wealth, which, to do her justice, were more in the way of kindness to others than display for herself. There was a kind of munificence about her which made one smile, and yet made one grow red and hot and just a little angry. It might not have mattered if she had been a princess, but it did not answer with a stockbroker's wife. She was so anxious to supply you with anything or everything you wanted. "Let me send it," she would say in a lavish way, whenever there was any shortcoming, and opened her pretty mouth and stared with all her pretty eyes, when her offers were declined. She wanted that delicate sense of other people's pride, which a true great lady always has. She did not understand why one would rather have one's own homely maid to wait, than borrow her powdered slave ; and would rather walk than be taken up in her fine carriage. This bewildered her, poor little woman. She thought it was unkind of me in particular. "You can't *really* prefer to drive along in the dust in your little low carriage," she said, with a curious want of perception that my pony carriage was my own. This was the

only defect I found in her, and it was a failing which leant to virtue's side. Her husband was more a man of the world, but he too had money written all over him. They were dreadfully rich, and even in their freest moment they could not get rid of it—and they were young and open-hearted, and anxious to make everybody happy. They had people down from town as Lottie prophesied—fashionable people sometimes, and clever people, and rich people. We met all kinds of radicals, and artists, and authors, and great travellers at Dinglewood. The Greshams were rather proud of their literary acquaintances, indeed, which was surprising to us. I have seen old Sir Thomas look very queer when he was told he was going to meet So-and-So, who had written some famous book. "Who is the fellow?" he said privately to me, with a comical look, for he was not very literary in his tastes;—neither were the Greshams for that matter, but then, having no real rank, they appreciated a little distinction, howsoever it came; whereas the second cousin of any poor lord or good old decayed family was more to the most of us than Shakspeare himself or Raphael; though of course it would have been our duty to ourselves to be very civil to either of those gentlemen had we met them at dinner, anywhere on the Green.

But there was no doubt that this new lively household, all astir with new interests, new faces, talk and movement, and pleasant extravagance, woke us all up. They were so rich that they took the lead in many things, in spite of all that could be done to the contrary. None of us could afford so many parties. The Greshams had always something on hand. Instead of our old routine of dinners and croquet-parties, and perhaps two or three dances a year for the young people, there was an endless variety now at Dinglewood; and even if we elders could have resisted Mrs. Gresham's pretty winning ways on our own account, it would have been wicked to neglect the advantage for our children. Of course this did not apply to me, who have no children: but I was never disposed to stand very much on my dignity, and I liked the young couple. They were so fond of each other, and so good-looking, and so happy, and so ready,—too ready—to share their advantages with everybody. Mrs. Gresham sent her man over with I don't know how much champagne the morning of the day when they were all coming to play croquet on my little lawn, and he wanted to know, with his mistress's love, whether he should come to help, or if there was anything else I wanted. I had entertained my friends in my quiet way before she was born, and I did not like it. Lottie Stoke happened to be with me when the message arrived, and took up the reasonable view, as she had got into the way of doing where the Greshams were concerned.

"Why should not they send you champagne?" she said. "They are as rich as Croesus, though I am sure I don't know much about him; and you are a lady living by yourself and can't be expected to think of all these things."

"My dear Lottie," said I—and I confess I was angry—"if you are

not content with what I can give you, you need not come to me. The Greshams can stay away if they like. Champagne in the afternoon when you are playing croquet! It is just like those nouveaux riches. They would think it still finer, I have no doubt, if they could drink pearls, like Cleopatra. Champagne!"

"They must have meant it for cup, you know," said Lottie, a little abashed.

"I don't care what they meant it for," said I. "You shall have cups of tea; and I am very angry and affronted. I wonder how they think we got on before they came!"

And then I sat down and wrote a little note, which I fear was terribly polite, and sent it and the baskets back with John Thomas, while Lottie went and looked at all the pictures as if she had never seen them before, and hummed little airs under her breath. She had taken up these Greshams in the most curious way. Not that she was an unreasonable partizan; she could see their faults like the rest of us, but she was always ready to make excuses for them. "They don't know any better," she would say softly when she was driven to the very extremity of her special pleading. And she said this when I had finished my note and was just sending it away.

"But why don't they know better?" said I; "they have had the same education as other people. He was at Eton, where a boy should learn how to behave himself, even if he does not learn anything else. And she went to one of the fashionable schools—as good a school as any of you ever went to."

"We were never at any school at all," said Lottie with a little bitterness. "We were always much too poor. We have never learned anything, we poor girls; whereas Ada Gresham has learned everything," she added, with a little laugh.

It was quite true. Poor little Mrs. Gresham was overflowing with accomplishments. There never was such an education as she had received. She had gone to lectures, and studied thorough bass, and knew all about chemistry, and could sympathize with her husband, as the newspapers say, and enter into all his pursuits. How fine it sounds in the newspapers! Though I was angry, I could not but laugh too—a young woman wanted an elaborate education indeed to be fit to be young Gresham's wife.

"Well," I said, "after all, I don't suppose she means to be impertinent, Lottie, and I like her. I don't think her education has done her much harm. Nobody could teach her to understand other people's feelings; and to be rich like that must be a temptation."

"I should like to have such a temptation," said Lottie, with a sudden sparkle in her eyes. "Fancy! there are four Greshams, and they are all as rich. The girl is married, you know, to a railway man; and, by-the-by," she went on suddenly after a pause, "they tell me one of the brothers is coming here to-day."

She said this in an accidental sort of way, but I could see there was

nothing accidental about it. She drew her breath hard, poor girl, and a little feverish colour got up in her cheeks. It is common to talk of girls looking out for husbands, and even hunting that important quarry. But when now and then in desperate cases such a thing does actually come before one's eyes, it is anything but an amusing sight. The Stokes were as poor as the Greshams were rich. Everard had ruined himself, and half-killed everybody belonging to him only the year before; and now poor Lottie saw a terrible chance before her, and rose to it with a kind of tragic valour. I read her whole meaning and resolution in her face, as she said, with an attempt at a smile, these simple-sounding words; and an absolute pang of pity went through me. Poor Lottie!—it was a chance, for her family and for herself—even for poor Everard, whom they all clung to, though he had gone so far astray. What a change it would make in their situation and prospects, and everything about them! You may say it was an ignoble foundation to build family comfort upon. I do not defend it in any way; but when I saw what Lottie meant, my heart ached for her. It did not seem to me ridiculous or base, but tragic and terrible; though to be sure in all likelihood there is nobody who will think so but me.

Before Lottie left me, Mrs. Gresham came rushing over, in her pretty summer dress, with her curls and ribbons fluttering in the breeze. She came to ask me why I had been so unkind, and to plead and remonstrate. "We have so much, we don't know what to do with it," she said; "Harry is always finding out some new vintage or other, and the cellars are overflowing. Why would not you use some of it? We have so much of everything we don't know what to do."

"I would rather not, thanks," I said, feeling myself flush; "what a lovely day it is. Where are you going for your drive? The woods will be delicious to-day."

"Oh, I have so much of the woods," cried Mrs. Gresham. "I thought of going towards Estcott to make some calls. But dear Mrs. Mulgrave, about the champagne?"

"It is a little too early for the heath," said Lottie steadily, looking our visitor in the face. "It is always cold there. What they call bracing, you know; but I don't care about being braced, the wind goes through and through one, even on a sunny day."

"It is because you are so thin," said Mrs. Gresham; "I never feel the cold for my part; but I shall not drive at all to-day—I forgot—I shall go and fetch Harry from the station, and come to you, Mrs. Mulgrave: and you will not be cross, but let me send back John Thomas with—"

"My dear, I am going to give you some tea," said I, "and my maids can manage beautifully; the sight of a gorgeous creature like John Thomas distracts them; they can do nothing but stare at his plush and his powder. We shall be very glad to have Mr. Gresham and you."

"But—" she began eagerly. Then she caught Lottie's eye, who had made some sign to her, and stopped short, staring at me with her blue

eyes. She could not make it out, and no hint short of positive demonstration could have shown her that she had gone too far. She stopped in obedience to Lottie's sign, but stared at me all the same. Her prosperity, her wealth, her habit of overcoming everything that looked in the least like a difficulty, had taken even a woman's instinct from her. She gazed at me, and by degrees her cheeks grew red: she saw she had made a mistake somehow, but even up to that moment could not tell what it was.

"Harry's brother is coming with him," she said, a little subdued; "may I bring him? He is the eldest, but he is not married yet. He is such a man of the world. Of course he might have married when he liked, as early as we did, there was nothing to prevent him; but he got into a fashionable set first, and then he got among the artists. He is quite what they call a Bohemian you know. He paints beautifully—Harry always consults Gerald before buying any pictures; I don't know what he does with all his money, for he keeps up no establishment, and no horses nor anything. I tell him sometimes he is an old miser, but I am sure I have no reason to say so, for he gives me beautiful presents. I should so like to bring him here."

"Yes, bring him by all means," said I; but I could not help giving a little sigh as I looked at Lottie, who was listening eagerly. When she saw me look at her, her face flamed scarlet, and she went in great haste to the window to hide it from Mrs. Gresham. She saw I had found her out, and did not know what compassion was in my heart. She gave a wistful glance up into my face as she went away. "Don't despise me!" it said. Poor Lottie! if it ever could be lawful to do evil that good might come! They went away together, the poor girl and the rich happy young wife. Lottie was a little the older of the two, and yet she was not old, and they were both pretty young women. They laid their heads together and talked earnestly as girls do, as they went out of my gate, and nobody could have dreamed that their light feet were entangled in any web of tragedy. The sight of the two who were so unlike, and the thought of the future which might bring them into close connection made me melancholy, I could not have told why.

CHAPTER II.

WE did not miss the champagne-cup that afternoon; indeed, I do not approve of such beverages for young people, and never sanction anything but tea before dinner. The Dinglewood people were doing their best to introduce these foolish extravagancies among us, but I for one would not give in. Young Gresham, though he took some tea, drew his wife aside the moment after, and I heard him question her.

"It was not my fault, Harry," she cried, not knowing I was so near. "She sent it all back, and Lottie said I had hurt her feelings."

I did not know what to do. She would not even have John Thomas to wait."

"Nonsense!" said Harry Gresham; "you should have insisted. We ought not to let her go to any expense. I don't suppose she has a shilling more than she wants for her own affairs."

"But I could not help it," said his wife.

I don't know what Lottie had said to her, but she was evidently a little frightened. As for Harry, I think he would have liked to leave a bank-note for me on one of the tables. People have told me since that it was a very bad sign, and that it is only when people are getting reckless about money that they think of throwing it away in presents; but I cannot say I have had much experience of that weakness. The new brother who had come with them was a very different kind of man. I cannot say I took to him at first. He was not a wealthy, simple-minded, lavish creature like his brother. He was more like other people. Harry Gresham was red and white, like a girl, inclining to be stout, though he was not above thirty, and with the manners which are, or were, supposed to be specially English—downright and straightforward. Gerald was a few years older, a little taller, bronzed with the sun, and bearing the indescribable look of a man who has mixed much with the world. I looked at Lottie Stoke when I made my first observations upon the stranger, and saw that she too was looking at him with a strange expression, half of repugnance, half of wistfulness in her eyes. Lottie had not done her duty in the way of marrying, as she ought to have done, in her early youth. She had refused very good offers, as her mother was too apt to tell with a little bitterness. Now at last, when things were going so badly with the family, she had made up her mind to try; but when she did so she expected a second Harry Gresham, and not this man of the world. She looked at him as a martyr might look, standing on the edge of a precipice, gathering up her strength for the plunge, shrinking yet daring everything. My party was quite dull for the first hour because of this pause which Lottie made on the brink, for she was always the soul of everything. When I saw her all at once rise up from the chair where she had been sitting obstinately beside old Mrs. Beresford, and go up to Mrs. Gresham, who was standing aside with her brother-in-law looking on, I knew she had made up her mind at last, and taken the plunge. An experienced rich young man of the nineteenth century! I thought to myself she might spare her pains.

Just at that moment I saw the gorgeous figure of John Thomas appear at the end of my lawn, and a sudden flush of anger came over me. I got up to see what he wanted, thinking they had sent him back again notwithstanding my refusal. But just before I reached him I perceived that his errand was to his master, to whom he gave a telegram. Mr. Gresham tore it open at my side. He ran his eye over the message, and muttered something between his teeth and grew red all over in indignation or trouble. Then, seeing me, he turned round, with an effort, with one of his broad smiles.

"Business even in the midst of pleasure," he said. "Is it not too bad?"

"If it is only business—," said I. Whenever I see one of those telegraph papers, it makes my heart beat. I always think somebody is ill or dead.

"Only business, by Jove!" said Harry. His voice was quite subdued, but he laughed—a laugh which sounded strange and not very natural. Then he gave himself a sort of shake, and thrust the thing into his pocket, and offered me his arm, to lead me back to my place. "By-the-by," he said, "I am ready to quarrel with you, Mrs. Mulgrave. When we are so near why don't you let us be of some use to you? It would be the greatest pleasure both to Ada and me."

"Oh, thanks; but indeed I don't want any help," I cried, abruptly coming to a sudden stop before Lady Denzil's chair.

"You are so proud," he said with a smile, and so left me to plunge into the midst of the game, where they were clamouring for him. He played all the rest of the afternoon, entering into everything with the greatest spirit; and yet I felt a little disturbed. Whether it was for Lottie, or whether it was for Harry Gresham I could not well explain to myself; a feeling came over me like the feeling with which one sometimes wakes in the morning without any reason for it—an uneasy restless sense that something somehow was going wrong.

The Greshams were the last of my party to go away, and I went to the gate with them, as I had a way of doing, and lingered there for a few minutes in the slanting evening light. It was nearly seven o'clock, but they did not dine till eight and were in no hurry. She wore a very pretty dress—one of those soft pale greys which soil if you look hard at them—and had gathered the long train over her arm like a figure in a picture; for though she was not very refined, Ada Gresham was not a vulgar woman to trail her dress over a dusty road. She had taken her husband's arm as they went along the sandy brown pathway, and Gerald on the other side carried her parasol and leant towards her to talk. As I looked at them I could not but think of the strange differences of life: how some people have to get through the world by themselves as best they may, and some have care and love and protection on every side of them. These two would have kept the very wind from blowing upon Ada; they were ready to shield her from every pain, to carry her in their arms over any thorns that might come in her way. The sunshine slanted sideways upon them as they went along, throwing fantastic broken shadows of the three figures on the hedgerow, and shining right into my eyes. I think I can see her now leaning on her husband's arm, looking up to his brother, with the pretty sweep of the grey silk over her arm, the white embroidered skirts beneath, and the soft rose-ribbons that caught the light. Poor Ada! I have other pictures of her, beside this one, in my memory now.

Next day we had a little discussion upon the new brother, in the after-

noon when my visitors looked in upon me. We did not confine ourselves to that one subject. We diverged, for instance, to Mrs. Gresham's toilette, which was so pretty. Lottie Stoke had got a new bonnet for the occasion ; but she had made it herself, and though she was very clever, she was not equal to Elise.

"Fancy having all one's things made by Elise ! " cried Lucy the little sister, with a rapture of anticipation. "If ever I am married, nobody else shall dress me."

"Then you had better think no more of curates," said some malicious critic, and Lucy blushed. It was not her fault if the curates amused her. They were mice clearly intended by Providence for fun and torture. She was but sixteen and meant no harm, and what else could the kitten do ?

Then a great controversy arose among the girls as to the claims of the new brother to be called handsome. The question was hotly discussed on both sides, Lottie alone taking no part in the debate. She sat by very quietly, with none of her usual animation. Nor did she interpose when the Gresham lineage and connection—the little cockney papa who was like a shabby little miser, the mother who was large and affable and splendid, a kind of grand duchess in a mercantile way—were taken in hand. Lottie could give little sketches of them all when she so pleased ; but she did not please that day.

"This new one does not look like a nobody," said one of my visitors. "He might be the Honourable Gerald for his looks. He is fifty times better than Mr. Gresham, though Mr. Gresham is very nice too."

"And he has such a lovely name !" cried Lucy. "Gerald Gresham ! Any girl I ever heard of would marry him just for his name."

"They have all nice names," said the first speaker, who was young too, and attached a certain weight to this particular. "They don't sound like more rich people. They might be of a good old family to judge by their names."

"Yes ; she is Ada," said Lucy, reflectively, "and he is Harry, and the little boy's name is Percy. But Gerald is the darling ! Gerald is the one for me !"

The window was open at the time, and the child was talking incautiously loud, so that I was not much surprised, for my part, when a peal of laughter from outside followed this speech, and Ada, with her brother-in-law in attendance, appeared under the verandah. Of course, Lucy was covered with confusion ; but her blushes became the little creature, and gave her a certain shy grace which was very pretty to behold. As for Lottie, I think the contrast made her paler. Looking at her beautiful refined head against the light, nobody could help admiring it ; but she was not round and dimpled and rosy like her little sister. After a while Gerald Gresham managed to get into the corner where Lottie was, to talk to her ; but his eyes sought the younger creature all the same. A man has all his own way when there is but one in the room. He was

gracious to all the girls, like a civilised English sultan ; but they were used to that, poor things, and took it very good-naturedly.

"It is not his fault if he is the only man in the place," said Lucy ; and she was not displeased, though her cheeks burned more hotly than ever when he took advantage of her incautious speech.

"I must not let you forget that it is Gerald who is the darling," he said, laughing. Of course it was quite natural, and meant nothing, and perhaps no one there but Lottie and myself thought anything of this talk ; but it moved her, poor girl, with a certain mortification, and had a curious effect upon me. I could not keep myself from thinking, Would it be Lucy after all ? After her sister had made up her mind in desperation ; after she had screwed her courage to the last fatal point ; after she had consciously committed herself and compromised her maiden uprightness, would it be Lucy who would win the prize without an effort ? I cannot describe the effect it had upon me. It made me burn with indignation to think that Lottie Stoke was putting forth all her powers to attract this stranger—this man who was rich, and could buy her if he pleased ; and, at the same time, his looks at Lucy filled me with the strangest sense of disappointment. I ought to have been glad that such humiliating efforts failed of success, and yet I was not. I hated them, and yet I could not bear to think they would be in vain.

"And Harry has gone to town again to-day," said Ada, with a pout of her pretty mouth, "though he promised to stay and take me up the river. They make his life wretched with those telegrams and things. I ask him, What is the good of going on like this, when we have plenty of money ? And then he tells me I am a little fool and don't understand."

"I always feel sure something dreadful has happened whenever I see a telegram," said Mrs. Stoke.

"Oh, we are quite used to them : they are only about business," said Ada, taking off her hat and smoothing back, along with a twist of her pretty hair, the slightest half visible pucker of care from her smooth young brow.

"Only business !" said Gerald. They were the same words Harry had said the day before, and they struck me somehow. When he caught my eye he laughed, and added something about the strange ideas ladies had. "As if any accident, or death, or burial could be half so important as business," he said, with the half sneer which we all use as a disguise to our thoughts. And some of the little party exclaimed, and some laughed with him. To be sure, a man in business, like Harry, Gresham, or a man of the world, like his brother, must be less startled by such communications than such quiet country people as we were. That was easy enough to see.

That same night, when I came across from the Lodge, where I had been spending the evening, Dinglewood stood blazing out against the sky with all its windows lighted up. Sir Thomas, who was walking across the Green with me, as it was so fine a night, saw me turn my head that way and

looked too. The whole house had the air of being lighted up for an illumination. It always had; it revealed itself, its different floors, and even the use of its different rooms to all the world by its lights. The Greshams were the kind of people who have every new improvement that money can procure. They made gas for themselves, and lighted up the entire house, in that curious mercantile millionaire way which you never see in a real great house. Sir Thomas's look followed mine, and he shook his grey head a little.

"I hope no harm will come of it," he said; "they are going very fast over there, Mrs. Mulgrave. I hope they are able to keep it up."

"Able!" said I, "they are frightfully rich;" and I felt half aggrieved by the very supposition.

"Yes," said Sir Thomas, "they would need to be rich. For a little while that may do; but I don't think any man in business can be rich enough to stand that sort of thing for a long time together."

"Oh, they can bear it, no doubt," I said, impatient of Sir Thomas's old-fashioned ways. "Of course, it was very different in the Coventrys' time."

"Ah, in the Coventrys' time," said Sir Thomas, regretfully; "one does not often get such neighbours as the Coventrys. Take care of that stone. And now, here we are at your door."

"Good night!" said I, "and many thanks;" but I stood outside a little in the balmy evening air, as Sir Thomas went home across the Green. I could not see Dinglewood from my door, and the Lodge, which was opposite, glimmered in a very different way, with faint candles in Lady Denzil's chamber, and some of the servants' sleeping rooms, and the soft white lamp-light in the windows below; domestic and necessary lights, not like the blaze in the new house. Sir Thomas plodded quietly home, with his grey head bent and his hands behind him under his coat, in the musing tranquillity of old age; and a certain superstitious feeling came over me. It was my gaze at the illuminated house which made him say those uncomfortable words. I felt as if I had attracted to the Greshams, poor children, in their gaiety and headlessness, the eye of some sleeping Fate.

CHAPTER III.

I HAVE often been impatient in reading books, to find the story go on from one party to another, from one ball to another, as if life had nothing more important in it. But sometimes no doubt it does happen so. The life of the Greshams was made up of balls and parties; they were never alone; Dinglewood blazed out to the skies every evening, and the carriages flashed out and in, and one kind of merry-making or another went on all day. Lottie Stoke was there continually, and there grew up a curious friendship, half strife half accord, between Gerald and herself. He had nothing

to do with the business as it turned out, and consequently was not half so rich. But still he was very well off. I don't know what it is about people in business which gives them a kind of primitive character: they are less sophisticated than the rest of us, though possibly not more simple. The Greshams took a simple pleasure in pleasure for itself, without making it a mere medium for other things, as most of us do. They were fond of company, fond of dancing, delighted with picnics, and even with croquet, without any ulterior motive, like children. They were fond even of their wealth, which gave them so many pretty and so many pleasant things. They enjoyed it with all their hearts, and took an innocent-foolish delight in it, which spiteful people set down to purse-pride; but which in reality was more like the open satisfaction of children in their dear possessions. Gerald was a very different being: I never saw him without feeling that his visit was not a mere visit, but had some motive in it. Before Lottie roused him to talk and battle with her, he would look on at their great parties with a curious, anxious, dissatisfied air, as if he suspected or feared something. I think poor Lottie went further than she meant to go: she grew interested herself, when she had meant only to interest him, and was more excited by his presence than he was by hers. They carried on a kind of perpetual duel, very amusing to the spectators, and there was no doubt that he liked it. But he liked Lucy's funny little shy speeches too; and he had some interest more absorbing, more serious than either, which made his face very grave when the two girls were not there. Harry Gresham had sometimes the air of getting impatient of his brother's presence. Now and then they passed my house walking together, and not enjoying their walk, according to appearances. Once as I stood at my gate I heard Harry say sharply, "In any case Ada has her settlement," with a defiant air. And Gerald's face was full of remonstrance and expostulation. I could not help taking a great interest in these young people, and feeling a little anxious at the general aspect of affairs.

Things were in this state when the ball was given on Mrs. Gresham's birthday. I had nobody to take charge of for a wonder, and nothing to do but look on. The entire suite of rooms was thrown open, ablaze with light and sweet with flowers. There were great banks of geraniums in every corner where they could be piled, and the whole neighbourhood had been ravaged for roses. The room in which I took refuge was the smallest of all, which had been old Lady Sarah's boudoir in old times, and was a little removed from the dancing, and cooler than the rest. It had one little projecting window, not large enough to be called a bay, which looked out upon the terrace just above the spot where the old couple used to sit in the summer days. It was open, and the moon streamed in, making a curious contrast with the floods of artificial light. Looking out from it, you could see the Thames, like a silver ribbon, at the bottom of the slope, and the little island and the little house gleaming out white, with intense black shadows. Lottie Stoke came up to me while I stood at the

window, and looked out over my shoulder. "It looks like the ghost of the river and the ghost of the island," she said, putting her pretty arm round my waist with an agitated grasp. "I almost think we are all ghosts too."

"A curious moment to think so," said Gerald Gresham. My back was turned to them, so that I did not see him, but there sounded something like a thrill of excitement in the half sneer of his voice.

"Not curious at all," said Lottie; "how many of us are really here do you think? I know where Mrs. Mulgrave is! She is outside on the terrace with old Lady Sarah, listening to the old people's talk; though I am holding her fast all the same. We are in all sorts of places, the real halves of us; but our doubles do the dancing and the laughing, and eat the ices quite as well. It is chilly to be a ghost," said Lottie with a laugh; "come in from the window, I am sure there is a draught there."

"There is no draught," said Gerald; "you are afraid of being obliged to go into particulars, that is all."

"I am not in the least afraid," said Lottie. "There is Mrs. Damerel. She is in the nursery at the Rectory, though you think you have her here. She is counting Agatha's curl-papers to see if there is the right number; for children are never properly attended to when the mother's eye is wanting. I don't know where you are, Mr. Gerald Gresham; that would be too delicate an inquiry. But look, your brother has gone upon 'Change, though he is in the middle of his guests. He looks as like business as if he had all the Reduced Consols on his mind; he looks as if—good heavens!"

Lottie stopped, and her tone was so full of alarm and astonishment, that I turned suddenly round to look too, in a fright. Harry Gresham was standing at the door; he had a yellow envelope in his hand, another of those terrible telegrams which are always bringing misery. He had turned round unawares facing us, and facing the stream of people who were always coming and going. I never saw in all my life so ghastly a face. It showed the more that he was so ruddy and cheerful by nature. In a moment every tinge of colour had disappeared from it. His mouth was drawn down, his blue eyes looked awful, shrinking back, as it were, among the haggard lines of the eyelids. The sight of him struck Lottie dumb, and came upon me like a touch of horror. But Gerald it was evident was not taken by surprise. Some crisis which he had been looking for had come at last.

"He has had some bad news," he said; "excuse me, my mother is ill—it must be that;" and he went through the stream of guests, fording the current, as it were, with noiseless rapidity. As for Lottie, she drew me back into the recess of the window and clung to me and cried—but not for Harry Gresham. Her nerves were at the highest strain, and broke down under this last touch; that was all.

"I knew something was going to happen," she said. "I felt it in the air; but I never thought it was coming upon them."

"It must be his mother," I said, though I did not think so. "Hush, Lottie! don't frighten *her*, poor child."

Lottie was used to restraining herself, and the tears relieved her. She dried her eyes and gave me a nervous hug as she loosed her arm from my waist.

"I cannot stand this any longer," she said; "I must go and dance, or something. I know there is trouble coming, and if I sit quiet I shall make a fool of myself. But you will help them if you can," she cried in my ear. Alas, what could I do?

By the time she left me the brothers had disappeared; and after half-an-hour's waiting, as nothing seemed to come of it, and as the heat increased, I went to the window again. The moon had gone off the house, but still shone white and full on the lawn, like a great sheet of silvery gauze bound and outlined by the blackest shadow. My mind had gone away from that temporary interruption. I was not thinking about the Greshams at all, when all at once I heard a rustle under the window. When I looked down two figures were standing there in the shadow. I thought at first they were robbers, perhaps murderers waiting to waylay some one. All my self-command could not restrain a faint exclamation. There seemed a little struggle going on between the two. "You don't know her," said the one; "why should you trust her?" "She is safer than the servants," said the other, "and she is fond of poor Ada." If my senses had not been quickened by excitement and alarm I should never have heard what they said. Then something white was held up to me in a hand that trembled.

"Give it to Ada," said Harry Gresham in a quick breathless imperative voice.

I took the bit of paper and clutched it in my hand, not knowing what I did, and then stood stupefied, and saw them glide down in the dark shadow of the house towards the river. Where were they going? What had happened? This could be no sudden summons to a mother's death-bed. They went cautiously in the darkness, the two brothers, keeping among the trees; leaning out of the window as far as I could, I saw Gerald's slighter figure and poor Harry's portly one, emerge into the moonlight close to the river, just upon the public road. Then I felt some one pull me on the other side. It was Lottie who had come back, excited, to ask if I had found out anything.

"I thought you were going to stretch out of the window altogether," she said, with a half-suspicious glance; and I held my bit of paper tight, with my fan in my other hand.

"I was looking at the moon," I said. "It is a lovely night. I am sorry it has gone off the house. And then the rooms are so hot inside."

"I should like to walk on the terrace," said Lottie, "but my cavalier has left me. I was engaged to him for this dance, and he has never come to claim it. Where has he gone?"

"I suppose he must have left the room," I said.

"I suppose it is their mother who is ill; perhaps they have slipped out quietly not to disturb the guests. If that is the case, you should go and stand by Mrs. Gresham, Lottie. She will want your help."

"But they never would be so unkind as to steal away like this and leave everything to Ada!" cried Lottie. "Never! Harry Gresham would not do it for twenty mothers. As for Gerald, I daresay *any* excuse—"

And here she stopped short, poor girl, with an air of exasperation, and looked ready to cry again.

"Never mind," I said; "go to Mrs. Gresham. Don't say anything, Lottie, but stand by her. She may want it, for anything we know."

"As you stood by us," said Lottie, affectionately; and then she added with a sigh and a faint little smile, "But it never could be so bad as that with them."

I did not make her any reply. I was faint and giddy with fear and excitement; and just then, of course, Admiral Fortis's brother, a hazy old gentleman, who was there on a visit, and *havered* for hours together, whenever he could get a listener, hobbled up to me. He had got me into a corner, as it were, and built entrenchments round me before I knew, and then he began his longest story of how his brother had been appointed to the *Bellerophon*, and how it was his interest that did it. The thing had happened half a century before, and the Admiral had not been at sea at all for half that time, and here was a present tragedy going on beside us, and the message of fate crushed up with my fan in my hand. Lottie Stoke made her appearance in the doorway several times, casting appealing looks at me. Once she beckoned, and pointed energetically to the drawing-room in which poor little Mrs. Gresham was. But when I got time to think, as I did while the old man was talking, I thought it was best, on the whole, to defer giving my letter, whatever it was. It could not be anything trifling or temporary which made the master of the house steal away in the darkness. I have had a good many things put into my hands to manage, but I don't think I ever had anything so difficult as this. For I did not know, and could not divine, what the sudden misfortune was which I had to conceal from the world. All this time Mr. Fortis went on complacently with his talk about the old salt-water lords who were dead and gone. He stood over me, and was very animated; and I had to look up to him, and nod and smile, and pretend to listen. What ghosts we were, as Lottie said! My head began to swim at last as Mr. Fortis's words buzzed in my ear. "*My lord,*" I said, "*my brother's services—not to speak of my own family influence*"—"This formed a kind of chorus to it, and came in again and again. He was only in the middle of his narrative when Lottie came up, making her way through all obstacles. She was trembling, too, with excitement which had less foundation than mine.

"I can't find Mr. Gresham anywhere," she whispered. "He is not

in any of the rooms ; none of the servants have seen him, and it is time for supper. What are we to do ? ”

“ Is Ada alarmed ? ” said I.

“ No ; she is such a child,” said Lottie. “ But she is beginning to wonder. Come and say something to her. Come and do something. Don’t sit for ever listening to that tiresome old man. I shall go crazy if you do not come ; and she dancing as if nothing had happened ! ”

Mr. Fortis had waited patiently while this whispering went on. When I turned to him again he went on the same as ever. “ This was all to the senior sea lord, you understand, Mrs. Mulgrave. As for the other—”

“ I hope you will tell me the rest another time,” I said, like a hypocrite. “ I must go to Mrs. Gresham. Lottie has come to fetch me. I am so sorry—”

“ Don’t say anything about it,” said Mr. Fortis. “ I shall find an opportunity,” and he offered me his arm. I had to walk with him looking quite at my ease through all those pretty groups, one and another calling to me as I passed. “ Oh, please tell me if my wreath is all right,” Nelly Fortis whispered, drawing me from her uncle. “ Mrs. Mulgrave, will you look if I am torn ? ” cried another. Then pair after pair of dancers came whirling along, making progress dangerous. Such a sight at any time, when one is past the age at which one takes a personal interest in it, is apt to suggest a variety of thoughts ; but at this moment ! Lottie hovered about me, a kind of *avant courier*, clearing the way for me. There was something amazing to me in her excitement, especially as, just at the moment when she was labouring to open a way for me, Ada Gresham went flying past, her blue eyes shining, her cheeks more like roses than ever. She gave me a smiling little nod as her white dress swept over my dark one, and was gone to the opposite end of the room before I could say a word. Lottie drew her breath hard at the sight. Her sigh sounded shrill as it breathed past me. “ Baby ! ” she whispered. “ Doll ! ” And then the tears came to her eyes. I was startled beyond description by her looks. Had she come to *care* for Gerald in the midst of that worldly dreadful scheme of hers ? or what did her agitation mean ?

It was time for supper, however, and the elders of the party began to look for it ; and there were a good many people wondering and inquiring where was Mr. Gresham ? where were the brothers ? Young ladies stood with injured faces, who had been engaged to dance with Harry or Gerald ; and Ada herself, when her waltz was over, began to look about anxiously. By this time I had got rid of Mr. Fortis, and made up my mind what to do. I went up to her and stopped her just as she was asking one of the gentlemen, had he seen her husband ?—where was Harry ? I kept Harry’s bit of paper fast in my hand. I felt by instinct that to give her that would only make matters worse. I made up the best little story I could about old Mrs. Gresham’s illness.

"They both went off quite quietly, not to disturb the party," I said. "I was to put off telling you as long as I could, my dear, not to spoil your pleasure. They could not help themselves. They were very much put out at the thought of leaving you. But Sir Thomas will take Mr. Gresham's place; and you know they were obliged to go."

Tears sprang to poor Ada's eyes. "Oh, how unkind of Harry," she cried, "to go without telling me. As if I should have kept on dancing had I known. I don't understand it at all—to tell you, and go without a word to me!"

"My dear, he would not spoil your pleasure," I said; "and it would have been so awkward to send all these people away. And you know she may get better after all."

"That is true," said easy-minded Ada. "It *would* have been awkward breaking up the party. But it is odd about mamma. She was quite well yesterday. She was to have been here to-night."

"Oh, it must have been something sudden," I cried, at the end of my invention. "Shall I call Sir Thomas? What can I do to be a help to you? You must be Mr. and Mrs. Gresham both in one for to-night."

Ada put her laced handkerchief up to her eyes and smiled a little faint smile. "Will *you* tell Sir Thomas?" she said, "I feel so bewildered I don't know what to do."

Then I commenced another progress in search of Sir Thomas, Lottie Stoke still hovering about me as pale as a spirit. She took my arm as we went on. "Was that all a story?" she whispered in my ear, clasping my arm tightly with her hands. I made her no answer; I dared not venture even to let her see my face. I went and told the same story very circumstantially over again to Sir Thomas. I hope it was not a great sin; indeed, it might be quite true for anything I could tell. It was the only natural way of accounting for their mysterious absence; and everybody was extremely sorry, of course, and behaved as well as possible. Old Mrs. Gresham was scarcely known at Dinglewood, and Ada, it was evident, was not very profoundly affected after the first minute by the news, so that, on the whole, the supper-table was lively enough, and the very young people even strayed into the dancing-room after it. But of course we knew better than that when trouble had come to the house. It was not much above one o'clock in the morning when they were all gone. I pretended to go too, shaking off Lottie Stoke as best I could, and keeping out of sight in a corner while they all streamed away. On the whole, I think public opinion was in favour of Harry Gresham's quiet departure without making any disturbance. "He was a very good son," people said, and then some of them speculated if the poor lady died, how Harry and his wife would manage to live in the quietness which family affliction demanded. "They will bore each other to death," said a lively young man. "Oh, they are devoted to each other," cried a young lady. Not a suspicion entered any one's mind. The explanation was quite

satisfactory to everybody but Lottie Stoke ; but then she had seen Harry Gresham's face.

When I had made quite sure that every one was gone, I stole back quietly into the blazing deserted rooms. Had I ever been disposed to moralise over the scene of a concluded feast, it certainly would not have been at that moment. Yet there was something pathetic in the look of the place,—brilliant as day, with masses of flowers everywhere, and that air of lavish wealth, prodigality, luxury—and to feel that one carried in one's hand something that might turn it into the scene of a tragedy, and wind up its bright story with the darkest conclusion. My heart beat loud as I went in. My poor little victim was still in the dancing-room—the largest and brightest of all. She had thrown herself down on her sofa, with her arms flung over her head like a tired child. Tears were stealing down her pretty cheeks. Her mouth was pouting and melancholy. When she saw me she rose with a sudden start, half annoyed, half pleased, to have some one to pour out her troubles upon. "I can't help crying," she said. "I don't mean to blame Harry ; but it was unkind of him to go away without saying a word to me. We never, never parted in that way before ;" and from tears the poor little woman fell into sobs,—grievous, innocent sobs, all about nothing, that broke one's heart.

"I have come to tell you something," I said, "though I don't know myself what it is. I am afraid it is something worse than you think. I said that because your brother-in-law said it ; but I don't believe it is anything about Mrs. Gresham. Your husband put this into my hand through the window as he went away. Take courage, dear. You want all your courage—you must keep up for the sake of the children, Ada !"—

I babbled on, not knowing what words I used, and she stared at me with bewildered eyes. "Into your hand through the window !" she said. She could not understand. She looked at the paper as if it were a charm. Then she opened it slowly, half afraid, half stupefied. Its meaning did not seem to penetrate her mind at first. After a while she gave a loud sudden shriek, and turned her despairing eyes on me. Her cry was so piercing and sudden that it rang through the house and startled every one. She was on the verge of hysterics, and incapable of understanding what was said to her, but the sight of the servants rushing to the door to ask what was the matter, brought her to herself. She made a brave effort and recovered something like composure, while I sent them away ; and then she held out to me the letter which she had clutched in her hand. It was written in pencil, and some words were illegible. This was what Harry said :—

"Something unexpected has happened to me, my darling. I am obliged to leave you without time even to say good-by. You will know all about it only too soon. It is ruin, Ada—and it is my own fault—but I never meant to defraud any man. God knows I never meant it. Try

and keep up your heart, dear ; I believe it will blow over, and you will be able to join me. I will write to you as soon as I am safe. You have your settlement. Don't let anybody persuade you to tamper with your settlement. My father will take care of that. Why should you and the children share my ruin ? Forgive me, dearest, for the trouble I have brought on you. I dare not pause to think of it. Gerald is with me. If they come after me, say I have gone to Bishop's Hope."

"What does it mean ?" cried poor Ada close to my ear. "Oh tell me, you are our friend ! What does it mean ?"

"God knows," I said. My own mind could not take it in, still less could I express the vague horrors that floated across me. We sat together with the lights blazing round us, the grand piano open, the musicians' stands still in their places. Ada was dressed like a queen of fairies, or of flowers : her gown was white, covered with showers of rosebuds ; and she had a crown of natural roses in her bright hair. I don't know how it was that her dress and appearance suddenly impressed themselves on me at that moment. It was the horror of the contrast, I suppose. She looked me piteously in the face, giving up all attempt at thought for her own part, seeking the explanation from me. "What is it ?" she asked. "Why has he gone away ? who is coming after him ? Oh, my Harry ! my Harry !" the poor young creature moaned. What could I say ? I took her in my arms and kissed her. I could do no more.

At this moment there came a loud knocking at the door. The house had fallen into deadly stillness, and at that hour of the night, and in the state we were, the sound was horrible. It rang through the place as if it had been uninhabited, waking echoes everywhere. Ada's very lips grew white—she clasped her small hands together and wrung them. "It is some one who has forgotten something," I said, but my agitation was so great that I felt a difficulty in speaking. We sat and listened in frightful suspense while the door was opened and the sound of voices reached us. It was not Harry who had come back ; it was not any one belonging to the place. Suddenly Ada rushed to the door with a flash of momentary petulance which simulated strength. "If it is any one for Mr. Gresham, bring him in here," she cried imperiously. I hurried after her and took her hand. It was like touching an electric machine. She was so strung to the highest pitch that only to touch her made me thrill and vibrate all over. And then the two men—two homely black figures—startled even in spite of their acquaintance with strange sights, came hesitatingly forward into the blazing light to confront the flower-crowned, jewelled, dazzling creature, made up of rose and lily, and diamond and pearl. They stood thunderstruck before her, notwithstanding the assurance of their trade. Probably they had never in their lives seen such an apparition before. The foremost of the two took off his hat with a look of deprecation. I do not think Ada had the least idea who they were. They were her husband's enemies, endowed with a certain dignity by that fact. But I

knew in a moment, by instinct, that they must be London detectives in search of him, and that the very worst possibility of my fears had come true.

I cannot tell what we said to these men or they to us ; they were not harsh nor unfeeling ; they were even startled and awestruck in their rough way, and stepped across the room cautiously, as if afraid of hurting something. We had to take them over all the house, through the rooms in which not a single light had been extinguished. To see us in our ball dresses, amid all that silent useless blaze of light, leading these men about, must have been a dreadful sight. For my part, though my share in it was nothing, I felt my limbs shake under me when we had gone over all the rooms below. But Ada took them all over the house. They asked her questions and she answered them in her simplicity. Crime might have fled out of that honest joyous home, but it was innocence, candid and open, with nothing to conceal, which dwelt there. I had to interfere at last and tell them we would answer no more questions ; and then they comforted and encouraged us in their way. "With this fine house and all these pretty things you'll have a good bit of money yet," said the superior of the two, "and if Mr. Gresham was to pay up, they might come to terms."

"Then is it debt ?" cried I, with a sudden bound of hope.

The man gave a short laugh. "It's debt to the law," he said. "It's felony, and that's bad ; but if you could give us a bit of a clue to where he is, and this young lady would see 'em and try, why it mightn't be so bad after all. Folks often lets a gentleman go when they won't let a common man."

"Would money do it ?" cried poor Ada ; "and I have my settlement. Oh, I will give you anything, everything I have, if you'll let my poor Harry go."

"We haven't got him yet, ma'am," said the man. "If you can find us any clue—"

And it was then I interfered ; I could not permit them to go on with their cunning questions to poor Ada. When they went away she sank down on a sofa near that open window in the boudoir from which I had seen Harry disappear. The window had grown by this time "a glimmering square," full of the blue light of early dawn. The birds began to chirp and stir in the trees ; the air which had been so soft and refreshing grew chill and made us shiver in our light dresses ; the roses in Ada's hair began to fade and shed their petals silently over her white shoulders. As long as the men were present she had been perfectly self-possessed ; now suddenly she burst into a wild torrent of tears. "Oh, Harry, my Harry, where is he ? why did not he take me with him ?" she cried. I cannot say any more, though I think every particular of that dreadful night is burned in on my memory. Such a night had never occurred in my recollection before.

Then I got Ada to go to bed, and kept off from her the sleepy insolent

man in powder who came to know if he was to sit up for master. "Your master has gone to Bishop's Hope," I said, "and will not return to-night;" the fellow received what I said with a sneer. He knew as well, or perhaps better than we did, what had happened. Everybody would know it next day. The happy house had toppled down like a house of cards. Nothing was left but the helpless young wife, the unconscious babies, to fight their battle with the world. There are moments when the sense of a new day begun is positive pain. When poor Ada fell into a troubled sleep, I wrapped myself up and opened the window and let in the fresh morning air. Looking out over the country, I felt as if I could see everything. There was no charitable shadow now to hide a flying figure: every eye would be upon him, every creature spying his flight. Where was Harry? When I looked at the girl asleep—she was but a girl, notwithstanding her babies—and thought of the horror she would wake to, it made my heart sick. And her mother was dead. There seemed no one to stand by her in her trouble but a stranger like me.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Ada woke, however, instead of being, as I was, more hopeless, she was almost sanguine. "There is my money, you know," she said. "After all, so long as it is only money.—I will go and see them, as the men said, and they will come to terms. So long as we are together, what do I mind whether we have a large house or a little one? And Harry himself speaks of my settlement. Don't cry. I was frightened last night; but now I see what to do. Will you come up to town with me by the twelve o'clock train? And you shall see all will come right."

I had not the heart to say a word. I went home, and changed that wretched evening dress which I had worn all through the night. It was a comfort to throw it off and cast it away from me; and I never wore it again; the very sight of it made me ill ever after. I found Ada almost in high spirits with the strength of her determination and certainty that she was going to redeem her husband and make all right, when I went back. Just before noon, however, when she was putting on her bonnet to start, a carriage swept up to the door. I was at the window of the dining-room when it came in sight, waiting for the brougham to convey us to the station. And the rector and his wife were coming up the avenue with "kind inquiries," in the full belief that old Mrs. Gresham was dying, and that the house was "in affliction." No wonder they started and stared at the sight. It was old Mrs. Gresham herself, in her pink ribbons, fresh and full and splendid, in robust health, and all the colours of the rainbow, who came dashing up, with her stately bays, to the door.

I had only time to realise that all our little attempts to keep up appearances were destroyed for ever when the old people came in; for

Harry's father had come too, though no one ever noticed him in presence of his wife. Mrs. Gresham came in smiling and gracious, in her usual affable and rather overwhelming way. She would have dismissed me majestically before she went to her daughter-in-law, but I was in reality too obtuse, by reason of fatigue and excitement, to understand what she meant. When she went to Ada the old man remained with me. He was not an attractive old man, and I had scarcely spoken to him before. He walked about the room looking at everything, while I sat by the window. If he had been an auctioneer valuing the furniture, he could not have been more particular in his investigations. He examined the handsome oak furniture, which was the envy of the Green,—the immense mirrors, the great china vases, the pictures on the walls,—as if making a mental calculation. Then he came and stood by me, and began to talk. "In my time young people were not so extravagant," he said. "There are thousands of pounds, I believe, sunk in this house."

"Mr. Gresham had a great deal of taste," I said, faltering.

"Taste! Nonsense. You mean waste," said the old man, sitting down astride on a carved chair, and looking at me across the back of it. "But I admit the things have their value—they'll sell. Of course you know Harry has got into a mess?" he went on. "Women think they can hush up these things; but that's impossible. He has behaved like an idiot, and he must take the consequences. Fortunately the family is provided for. Her friends need not be concerned in that respect."

"I am very glad," said I, as it was necessary to say something.

"So am I," said old Mr. Gresham. "I suppose they would have come upon me if that had not been the case. It's a bad business; but it is not so bad as it might have been. I can't make out how a son of mine should have been such an ass. But they all go so fast in these days. I suppose you had a very grand ball last night? A ball!" he repeated, with a sort of snort. I don't know if there was any fatherly feeling at all in the man; but if there was he hid it under this mask of harshness and contempt.

"Will not Mr. Gresham return?" I asked, foolishly; but my mind was too much worn out to have full control of what I said.

The old man gave a shrug, and glanced at me with a mixture of scorn and suspicion. "I can't say what may happen in the future," he said, dryly. "I should advise him not. But Ada can live where she likes—and she will not be badly off."

Old Mrs. Gresham stayed a long time upstairs with her daughter-in-law; so long that my patience almost deserted me. Mr. Gresham went off, after sitting silent opposite to me for some time, to look over the house, which was a relief; and no doubt I might have gone too, for we were far too late for the train. But I was too anxious to go away. When the two came down the old lady was just as cheerful and overwhelming as usual, though poor Ada was deadly pale. Mrs. Gresham came in with her rich, bustling, prosperous look, and shook hands with

me over again. "I am sure I beg your pardon," she said; "I had so much to say to Ada. We have not met for a whole month; and, poor child, they gave her such a fright last night. My dear, don't you mean to give us some luncheon? Grandpapa never takes lunch; you need not wait for him: but I am quite hungry after my long drive."

Then poor Ada rose and rung the bell; she was trembling so that she tottered as she moved. I saw that her lips were dry, and she could scarcely speak. She gave her orders so indistinctly that the man could not hear her. "Luncheon!" cried the old lady, in her imperious way. "Can't you hear what Mrs. Gresham says? Lunch directly—and tell my people to be at the door in an hour. Ada, a man who stared in my face like that, and pretended not to understand, should not stay another day in my house; you are a great deal too easy. So your ball was interrupted last night, Mrs. Mulgrave," she went on with a laugh, "and the blame laid on me. Oh, those boys! I hope the good people hereabouts will not take offence. I will never forgive them, though, for giving Ada such a fright, poor child. She thought I was dying, I suppose; and it was only one of Gerald's sporting scrapes. Some horse was being tampered with, and he would have lost thousands if they had not rushed off; so they made out I was dying, the wretched boys. Ha, ha! I don't look much like dying to-day."

"No, indeed," was all I could say. As for Ada she never opened her white lips, except to breathe in little gasps like a woman in a fever. The old lady had all the weight of the conversation to bear; and, indeed, she was talking not for our benefit, but for that of the servants, who were bringing the luncheon. She looked so rich and assured of herself that I think they were staggered in their certainty of misfortune and believed her for the moment. The young footman, who had just been begging me privately to speak a word for him to secure him another place, gave me a stealthy imploring look, begging me, as it were, not to betray him. The old gentleman was out, going over the house and grounds, but Mrs. Gresham ate a very good luncheon and continued her large and ample talk. "They sent me a message this morning," she said, as she ate, "and ordered me to come over and make their excuses and set things right. Just like boys! Give me some sherry, John Thomas. I shall scold them well, I promise you, when they come back—upsetting poor Ada's nerves, and turning the house upside down like this. I don't know what Ada would have done without you, Mrs. Mulgrave; and I hear you had their stable-men, trainers, or whatever they call them, to puzzle you too?"

"Yes," I said, struck dumb with wonder. Was all this an invention, or was she herself deceived? Poor Ada sat with her eyes cast down, and never spoke except in monosyllables; she could scarcely raise to her lips the wine which her mother-in-law made her swallow. I could not but admire the energy and determination of the woman. But at the same time she bewildered me, as she sat eating and drinking, with her elbow on the table and her rich lace mantle sweeping over the white table-cloth,

conversing in this confident way. To meet her eyes, which had not a shade of timidity or doubt about them, and see her evident comfort and enjoyment, and believe she was telling a downright lie, was almost more than was possible. "I did not know Mr. Gerald was a racing man," I faltered, not knowing what to say.

"Oh, yes, he is on the turf," said Mrs. Gresham, shrugging her shoulders; "he is on everything that don't pay. That boy has been a nuisance all his life. Not that there is anything bad about him; but he's fashionable, you know, and we are known to be rich, and everybody gives him his own way; and Harry's such a good brother——" said the rash woman all at once, to show how much at her ease she was. But this was taking a step too much. Ada could bear it no longer. There was a sudden sound of choking sobs, and then she sprang from the table. The strain had gone too far.

"I hear baby crying; I must go to baby," she sobbed; and rushed from the room without any regard to appearances. Even Mrs. Gresham, self-possessed as she was, had gone too far for her own strength. Her lip quivered, in spite of herself. She looked steadily down, and crumbled the bread before her in her strong agitated fingers. Then she gave a little laugh, which was not much less significant than tears.

"Poor little Ada," she said, "she can't bear to be crossed. She has had such a happy life, when anything goes contrary it puts her out." Perhaps it was the quivering of her own lip that brought back her vernacular. And then we began to discuss the ball as if nothing had happened. Her husband came in while we were talking, and shrugged his shoulders and muttered disapprobation, but she took no notice. She must have been aware that I knew all; and yet she thought she could bewilder me still.

I went home shortly after, grieved and disgusted and sick at heart, remembering all the wicked stories people tell of mercantile dishonesty, of false bankruptcies, and downright robberies, and the culprits who escape and live in wealth and comfort abroad. This was how it was to be in the case of Harry Gresham. His wife had her settlement, and would go to him, and they would be rich and well off, though he had as good as stolen his neighbour's property and squandered it away. Of course, I did not know all the particulars then; and I had got to be fond of these young people. I knew very well that Harry was not wicked, and that his little wife was both innocent and good. When one reads such stories in the papers, one says, "Wretches!" and thinks no more of it. But these two were not wretches, and I was fond of them, and it made me sick at heart. I went upstairs and shut myself into my own room, not being able to see visitors or to hear all the comment that, without doubt, was going on. But it did not mend matters when I saw from my window Mrs. Gresham driving past, lying back in her carriage, sweeping along swift as two superb horses could carry her, with her little old husband in the corner by her side, and a smile on her face, ready to wave her hand in gracious recogni-

tion of anyone she knew. She was like a queen coming among us, rather than the mother of a man who had fled in darkness and shame. I never despised poor Mrs. Stoke or thought less of her for Everard's downfall, but I felt scorn and disgust rise in my heart when these people passed my door; though Mrs. Gresham, too, was her son's champion in her own worldly way.

Some hours later Ada sent me a few anxious pleading words, begging me to go to her. I found her in the avenue, concealing herself among the trees; though it was a warm summer day she was cold and shivering. I do not know any word that can express her pallor. It was not the whiteness of death, but of agonized and miserable life, palpitating in every nerve and straining every faculty.

"Hush!" she said. "Don't go to the house—I can't bear it—I am watching for him—here!"

"Is he coming back?" I cried, in terror.

"I do not know; I can't tell where he is, or where he is going!" cried poor Ada, grasping my arm; "but if he should come back he would be taken. The house is watched. Did you not see that old man sitting under the hedge? There are people everywhere about watching for my Harry; and they tell me I am to stay quiet and take no notice. I think I will die—I wish I could die!"

"No, my darling!" I said, crying over her. "Tell me what it is? Did they bring you no comfort? He will not come back to be taken. There is no fear. Did they not tell you what it means?"

"They told me," cried Ada, with a violent colour flushing over her face, "that I was to keep my money to myself, and not to pay back that—that—what he has taken! It is true; he has taken some money that was not his, and lost it; but he meant to pay it back again, Mrs. Mulgrave. We were so rich; he knew he could pay it all back. And now he has lost everything and can't pay it. And they will put him in prison. Oh, I wish he had died! I wish we had all died," cried Ada, "rather than this—rather than to feel what I do to-day!"

"My dear," I cried, "don't say so; we cannot die when we please. It is a terrible misfortune; but when he did not mean it—"

Great tears rushed to Ada's eyes. "He did not mean *that*," she said; "but I think he meant me to keep my money and live on it. Oh, what shall I do? They say I will be wicked if I give it up. I will work for him with all my heart. But I cannot go on living like this, and keep what is not mine. If your husband had done it, Mrs. Mulgrave—don't be angry with me—would not you have sold the cottage and given up everything? And what am I to do?"

"You must come in and rest," I said. "Never mind what they said to you. You must do what is right, Ada, and Gerald will stand by you. He will know how to do it. Come in now and rest."

"Ah, Gerald!" cried the poor child, and then she leant on my shoulder and cried. The moment she heard even the name of one man

whom she could trust, her strength broke down. "Gerald will know how to do it!" she said, faintly, as I led her in, and tried to smile at me. It was a gleam of comfort in the darkness. I cannot describe the period of terrible suspense that followed. I stayed with her, making no pretence of going back to my own house; though when the story came to be in the newspapers all my friends wrote letters to me and disapproved of my conduct. I did not care; one knows one's own duties better than one's friends do. The day after the ball hosts of cards, and civil messages, and "kind inquiries" had poured upon Ada; but after that they totally stopped. Not a carriage nor a visitor came near the house for the three last days. The world fell away from us and left the poor young creature to bear her burden alone. In the midst of all this real suffering there was one little incident which affected my temper more than all the rest. Old Thomas Lee, an old man from the village, who used to carry little wares about in a basket, and made his living by it, had taken his place under the hedge close to the gates of Dinglewood, and sat there watching all day long. Of course, he was paid to do it, and he was very poor. But I don't think the money he earned so has done him much good. I have never given a penny or a penny's worth to old Lee since that time. Many a sixpence poor Harry had tossed at him as he passed in his Yankee waggon every morning to the station. I had no patience with the wretched old spy. He had the assurance to take off his hat to me when I went into the house he was watching, and I confess that it was with a struggle, no later back than last winter, when the season was at its coldest, that I consented to give him a little help for his children's sake.

It was nearly a week before we got any letters, and all these long days we watched and waited, glad when every night fell, trembling when every morning rose; watching at the windows, at the gates, everywhere that a peep could be had of the white, blinding, vacant road. Every time the postman went round the Green our hearts grew faint with anxiety: once or twice when the telegraph boy appeared, even I, though I was but a spectator, felt the life die out of my heart. But at last this period of dreadful uncertainty came to a close. It was in the morning, by the first post, that the letters came. They were under cover to me, and I took them to Ada's room while she was still sleeping the restless sleep of exhaustion. She sprang up in a moment and caught at her husband's letter as if it had been a revelation from heaven. The happiest news in the world could not have been more eagerly received. He was safe. He had put the Channel between him and his pursuers. There was no need for further watching. The relief in itself was a positive happiness. Ten days ago it would have been heartrending to think of Harry Gresham as an escaped criminal, as an exile, for whom return was impossible; disgraced, nameless, and without hope. To-day the news was joyful news: he was safe, if nothing more.

Then for the first time Ada indulged in the luxury of tears—tears that came in floods, like those thunder-showers which ease the hearts of the

young. She threw herself on my neck and kissed me again and again. "I should have died but for you : I had no mamma of my own to go to," she sobbed, like a baby. Perhaps the thing that made these childish words go to my heart was that I had no child.

Of course I expected, and everybody will expect, that after this excitement she should have fallen ill. But she did not. On the contrary, she came downstairs with me, and ate (almost for the first time) and smiled, and played with her children, while I stood by with the feeling that I ought to have a brain fever myself, if Ada would not see what was expected of her. But as the day ran on, she became grave, and ever graver. She said little, and it was mostly about Gerald ; how he must come home and manage everything ; how she was determined to take no rest, to listen to no argument, till the money was paid. I went home to my own house that evening, and she made no opposition. I said good-night to her in the nursery where she was sitting close by her little girl's bed. She was crying, poor child, but I did not wonder at that ; and nurse was a kind woman, and very attentive to her little mistress. I went round to the terrace and out by the garden, without having any particular reason for it. But before I reached the gate some one came tripping after me, and looking round I saw it was Ada, wrapped in a great waterproof cloak. She was going to walk home with me, she said. I resisted her coming, but it was in vain. It was a warm balmy night, and I could not understand why she should have put on her great cloak. But as soon as she was safe in my little drawing-room, her secret came out. Then she opened her mantle with a smile. On one of her arms hung a bundle ; on the other rested her sleeping baby. She laughed at my amaze, and then she cried. "I am going to Harry," she said ; and held her child closer, and dried her eyes and sat immovable, ready to listen to anything I chose to say. Heaven knows I said everything I could think of—of the folly of it, of her foolhardiness ; that she was totally unable for the task she was putting on herself ; that Harry had Gerald, and could do without her. All which she listened to with a smile, impenetrable, and not to be moved. When I had come to an end of my arguments, she stretched out to me the arm on which the bundle hung, and drew me close to her and kissed me again. "You are going to give me some biscuits and a little flask of wine," she said, "to put in my pocket. I have one of the housekeeper's old-fashioned pockets, which is of some use. And then you must say 'God bless you,' and let me go."

"God bless you, my poor child," I said, overcome ; "but you must not go ; little Ada too—"

Then her eyes filled with tears. "My pretty darling !" she said ; "but grandmamma will take her to Bishop's Hope. It is only baby that cannot live without his mother. Baby and Harry. What is Gerald ? I know he wants me."

"But he can wait," I cried ; "and you so young, so delicate, so unused to any trouble !"

"I can carry my child perfectly," said Ada. "I never was delicate. There is a train at eleven, down to Southampton. I found it out in the book: and after that I know my way. I am a very good traveller," she said, with a smile, "and Gerald must come to settle everything. Give me the biscuits, dear Mrs. Mulgrave, and kiss me and let me go."

And it had to be so, though I pleaded with her till I was hoarse. When the moment came, I put on my cloak too and walked with her, late as it was, a mile off to the new station, which both she and I had thought too far for walking in the cheerful daylight. I carried the bundle, while she carried the baby, and we looked like two homely countrywomen trudging home. She drew her hood over her head while she got her ticket, and I waited outside. Then in the dark I kissed her for the last time. I could not speak, nor did she. She took the bundle from me, grasping my hand with her soft fingers almost as a man might have done; and we kissed each other with anguish, like people who part for ever. And I have never seen her again.

As I came back, frightened and miserable, all by myself along the moonlit road, I had to pass the Stokes' cottage. Lottie was leaning out of the window, though it was now nearly midnight, with her face, all pallid in the moon, turned towards Dinglewood. I could scarcely keep myself from calling to her. She did not know what we had been doing, yet her heart had been with us that night.

CHAPTER V.

I WILL not describe the tumult that arose when it was discovered. The servants rushed over to me in a body, and I suggested that they should send for Mrs. Gresham; and that great lady came, in all her splendour, and took little Ada away, and gave everybody "notice." Then great bills of the auction covered the pillars at the gate, and strangers came in heaps to see the place. In a month everything had melted away like a tale that is told. The Greshams and their wealth and their liberality and their good-nature fell out of the very recollection of the people on the Green, along with the damask and the gilding and the flowers, the fine carriages and the powdered footmen. Everything connected with them disappeared. The new tenant altered the house a second time; and everything that could recall the handsome young couple and their lavish ways was cleared away. Of course there was nothing else talked of for a long time after. Everybody had his or her account of the whole business: some said poor Harry met his pursuers in the field close to the river, and that Gerald and he fought with them, and left them all but dead in the grass; some said that Ada and I defended the house, and would not let them in; and there were countless romances about the escape and Ada's secret following after. The imagination of my neighbours made many a fancy

sketch of that last scene; but never hit upon anything so touching as my last glimpse of her, with her baby under her cloak, going into the train. I held my peace; and let them speak. She had been as my own child for about a week, just a week of our lives; before that she was a common acquaintance, after it a stranger; but I could not let any vulgar tongues meddle with our relationship or her story in that sacred time.

And after a while the tale fell into oblivion, as every story does if we can but wait long enough. People forgot about the Greshams; sometimes a stranger would observe the name of Mr. Gresham, of Bishop's Hope, in some list of county charities, and would ask if he was a Gresham of Greshambury, or if he was any connection of the man who ran away. Of course, at the time, it was in all the newspapers. He had taken money that somebody had trusted him with and used it in his speculations. Of course he meant to pay it back; but then a great crash came. The men say there was no excuse for him, and I can see that there is no excuse; but he never meant it, poor Harry! And then the papers were full of further incidents, which were more unusual than Harry's sin or his flight. The *Times* devoted a leading article to it which everybody read, holding Mrs. Gresham up to the applause of the world. Ada gave up her settlement and all her own fortune, and "one of his brothers," the papers said, came forward, too, and most of the money was paid back. But Harry, poor fellow, disappeared. He was as if he had gone down at sea. His name and every sign of his life went out of knowledge—waves of forgetfulness, desertion, exile closed over them. And at Dinglewood they were never either seen or heard of again.

As long as it continued to be in the papers, Lottie Stoke kept in a very excited state. She came to me for ever finding out every word that was printed about it, dwelling on everything. That evening when the article appeared about Mrs. Gresham's heroic abandonment of her fortune, and about "one of his brothers," Lottie came with her eyes lighted up like windows in an illumination, and her whole frame trembling with excitement. She read it all to me, and listened to my comments, and clasped my hand in hers when I cried out, "That must be Gerald." She sat on the footstool, holding the paper, and gazed up into my face with her eyes like lamps. "Then I do not mind!" she cried, and buried her face in her hands and sobbed aloud. And I did not ask her what she meant—I had not the heart.

It was quite years after before I heard anything more of the Greshams, and then it was by way of Lottie Stoke that the news came. She had grown thinner and more worn year by year. She had not had the spirits to go out, and they were so poor that they could have no society at home. And by degrees Lottie came to be considered a little old, which is a dreadful business for an unmarried girl when her people are so poor. Mrs. Stoke did not upbraid her; but still, it may be guessed what her feelings were. But, fortunately, as Lottie sank into the background, Lacy came to the front. She was pretty, and fresh and gay, and more

popular than her sister had ever been. And, by-and-by, she did fulfil the grand object of existence, and married well. When Lucy told me of her engagement she was very angry with her sister.

"She says, how can I do it? She asks me if I have forgotten Gerald Gresham?" cried Lucy. "As if I ever cared for Gerald Gresham; or as if anybody would marry him after—— I shall think she cared for him herself if she keeps going on."

"Lucy!" said Lottie, flushing crimson under her hollow eyes. Lucy, for her part, was as bright as happiness, indignation, high health, and undiminished spirits could make her. But, for my part, I liked her sister best.

"Well!" she said; "and I do think it. You *would* lecture me about him when we were only having a little fun. As if I ever cared for him! And I don't believe," cried Lucy, courageously, "that he ever cared for me."

Her sister kissed her, though she had been so angry. "Don't let us quarrel now when we are going to part," she said, with a strange quiver in her voice. Perhaps the child was right; perhaps he had never cared for her, though Lottie and I both thought he did. He cared for neither of them, probably; and there was no chance that he would ever come back to Dinglewood, or show himself where his family had been so disgraced. But yet Lottie brightened up a little after that day, I can scarcely tell why.

Some time after she went on a visit to London, in the season: and it was very hard work for her, I know, to get some dresses to go in; for she never would have any of Lucy's presents. She was six weeks away, and she came back looking a different creature. The very first morning after her return she came over to me, glowing with something to tell. "Who do you think I met?" she said, with a soft flush trembling over her face. Her look brought one name irresistibly to my mind. But I would not reopen that old business; I shook my head; and said I did not know.

"Why, Gerald Gresham!" she cried. "It is true, Mrs. Mulgrave; he is painting pictures now—painting, you understand, not for his pleasure, but like a trade. And he told me about Ada and poor Harry. They have gone to America. It has changed him very much, even his looks; and instead of being rich, he is poor."

"Ah," I said, "'one of his brothers.' You always said it was Gerald," but I was not prepared for what was to come next.

"Did not I?" cried Lottie, triumphant; "I knew it was him." And then she paused a little, and sat silent, in a happy brooding over something that was to come. "And I think she was right," said Lottie, softly. "He had not been thinking of Lucy; it was not Lucy for whom he cared."

I took her hands into my own, perceiving what she meant; and then all at once Lottie fell a crying, but not for sorrow.

"That was how I always deceived myself," she said. "It was so

base of me at first ; I wanted to marry him because he was rich. And then I thought it was Lucy he liked ; she was so young and so pretty." Then she made a long pause, and put my hands upon her hot cheeks, and covered herself with them. "Your hands are so cool," she said, "and so soft and kind. I am going to marry him now, Mrs. Mulgrave, and he is poor."

This is a kind of postscript to the story, but still it is so connected with it that it is impossible to tell the one without the other. We were much agitated about this marriage on the Green. If Gerald Gresham had been rich, it would have been a different matter. But a stockbroker's son, with disgrace in the family, and poor ! I don't know any one who was not sorry for Mrs. Stoke under this unexpected blow. But I was not sorry for Lottie. Gerald, naturally, is not fond of coming to the Green, but I see them sometimes in London, and I think they suit each other. He tells me of poor Ada every time I see him. And I believe old Mr. Gresham is very indignant at Harry's want of spirit in not beginning again, and at Ada for giving up her settlement, and at Gerald for expending his money to help them—"A pack of fools," says the old man. But of course they will all, even the shipwrecked family in America, get something from him when he dies. As for the mother, I met her once at Lottie's door, getting into her fine carriage with the bays, and she was very affable to me. In her opinion it was all Ada's fault. "What can a man do with an extravagant wife who spends all his money before it is made ?" she said as she got into her carriage ; and I found it a little hard to keep my temper. But the Greshams and their story, and all the brief splendours of Dinglewood are almost forgotten by this time by everybody on the Green.

“The English are not a Musical People.”

ONE of our humourists has said that a quotation is never so apt as when it is misapplied; so I trust to prove the perfect aptitude of the quotation from common prejudice which heads these remarks, by showing its utter misapplication.

If what is common and false be vulgar, then certainly the disbelief in the musical capacities of the English is a vulgar prejudice; and it is none the less so because it is the most cordially entertained by a class of the population which as much supposes itself, as it is generally believed to be, superior to vulgarity. With such high example for the direct perversion of truth against ourselves, it is as little to be wondered at as it is much to be deplored, that musicians themselves too often pander to the prevalent folly by assuming foreign names or affecting foreign titles. It is their fashion, indeed, to give a foreign termination to words used in connection with music itself; thus the list of pieces to be performed in a concert is styled by them a *programme*; whereas good writers of our language, who apply the term to other than musical uses, spell it as they spell all words derived from the same Greek root. If a musician inverted the letters of his name so as to make another word, would he call such redistribution an *anagramme*? If he illustrated any theoretical point by a pictorial figure, would he name this a *diagramme*? Were a witty couplet written about music, would it be styled an *epigramme*? Would the cypher formed of a musician's initials be called a *monogramme*? If a despatch announced a singer's sudden indisposition, should it be named a *telegramme*? I am told, however, that we have taken the idea of concert bills, and, consequently, the word which defines them, from the French; and that is why we spell it in the French way. Well, we took India, or a large part of it, from the French, but do not call it *l'Inde*.

The truth is, however, that the prejudice against which English musicianship has to contend springs from domestic mistrust, more than from foreign depreciation, of our native capacity to love and practise the art. It dates, at earliest, within these last hundred and fifty years, to 'prove which I will adduce some pertinent facts from all periods of English history.

The genus Englishman is a compound of Briton, Saxon, and Dane. It would be easy to exemplify, with anecdotes amusing as authentic, the very strong musical bent and musical ability of each of these three components of our nation, and thus to prove that the art love of the English people was inherent in us from the races of which we are amalgamated. I will forbear the narration of many of these stories, but must recount one

to show that our forefathers, prior to the Conquest, had musical proficiency far above the composition and performance of a melody to such an accompaniment as would suffice to keep the voice in tune, which was the utmost attainment in musical art of the classic Greeks and Romans, and of all the South European nations until long beyond the period now under consideration. In the middle of the eleventh century, Hereward, the son of Godiva, whose noble devotion rescued the people of Coventry from their lord's oppression,—Hereward, the last of the English who forcibly resisted the tyranny of our Norman invaders,—presented himself with his two nephews at the bridal feast of the daughter of a Cornish king, where they were received in the capacity of minstrels, which character they supported by singing sometimes singly, and sometimes in harmony of three parts, which latter, the chronicle especially states, was according to the custom of the race that then peopled our eastern counties. Here is distinct evidence, which might easily be developed into far greater amplitude, that harmony, the art of musical combination, which is the basis of all musical construction, was known and practised and enjoyed here, some hundreds of years before the greatly vaunted Roman school appropriated the art of descant, or counterpoint, which art the Church indeed derived from the unschooled practice of our Northern laity. In the latter part of the twelfth century, this practice of polyphony was certainly current as much among the people of Wales as among those of the north-east of our island; and there is good ground to assume that harmony must have been commonly familiar in England when those stalwart Danes, the Vikings of the sea and lords of the shell, masters alike of sword and song, first set foot upon our shores. Further, what seems to have been the intuitive art use of the untaught people in the misty age of tradition prior to the last eight hundred years, has, in spite of the neglect of popular education, preserved itself to the present day, when, in Essex and in Wales,—the extremes of east and west,—the country folk rejoice themselves at harvest-tide and other seasons of festive meeting, with songs in three-part harmony, which, if it may not pass the ordeal of a contrapuntist's scrutiny, clearly indicates the aptitude of the singers and the inclination of the listeners.

In the Norman policy of denationalising the people, the attempt is conspicuously characteristic of Abbot Thurstan to impose, by force of arms, the form of chant devised by Guillaume of Fécamp, upon the use of the English clergy. It was impossible, however, to deracinate the love of music, which was firmly rooted in the native heart, and had spread its winged seeds from generation to generation of the native people.

Accordingly, when Thomas à Beckett in 1159, as High Chancellor of England, went to negotiate the marriage of Henry the Second's son with the daughter of Louis VII., and desired, for the success of his mission, to display to the utmost the importance in wealth and civilization of his own country, he entered Paris in a procession that was headed by two hundred and fifty boys, who were arranged in groups that each sang pieces in harmony of three parts, which, the record expressly notes, was after the

English manner, and, till then, unheard in France. Yet again, in 1810, the lapse of ages had not changed the usage at home, nor advanced foreign musicianship to the capability of coping with ours; for then Thomas Cromwell, once Wolsey's secretary, and subsequently Earl of Essex, went to Rome to procure from Julius II. a renewal of some ecclesiastical privileges for the town of Boston, and sought to propitiate the pope with the singing of Three-men's Songs, with the novelty and beauty of which Julius was so well pleased that he received the Englishman with favour, and readily granted his suit.

It has been pretended that all historical allusions to the musical proclivities of our countrymen refer at best to their relish for simple tunes and their preference of the vulgarest. Whoever has put forth this proposition, which has no foundation but in the fancy of him that has advanced it, must have taken his own incapacity as the standard of the nation, and described the people as he knew himself. I have shown that by intuition and by cultivation the English were for long in advance of Continental nations in the province of harmony. It is now to note how also this country was before the rest of the world in contrapuntal elaborations. It would be prolix here to cite the many concurrent statements of writers of successive periods as to the high advancement of musical art in England, and as to the eminence of English artists in the early stages of its progress—statements that have been overlooked or misquoted by some musical historians, and are therefore unknown to readers whose researches in art history are limited to Burney and Hawkins. I may opportunely adduce, however, the Six-men's Songs,—*"Sumer is icumen in,"*—as a testimony of the state of music here at a period when there is no sign of its equal advancement in any other land. The date of the MS. of this remarkable specimen of scholarship, and, I will aver, of such melodious fluency as critics call inspiration, was long disputed; but I believe that the best judges now agree in assigning it, from internal and collateral evidence, to 1250. Now to speak technically—and I must be technical to be true—this piece is a canon for four in one in the unison, with a foot or burden also of canonic construction for yet two more voices; and as such, while some grammatical irregularities cannot be denied in it, it presents an amount of twofold complication that is wonderful for its age, and remarkable for any age.

Although we commonly give to the Church the credit of all the scholarship of the Middle Ages, she ever took Time by the fetlock in his musical course, lagging always at the heels of the laity in every step of the art's career. One evidence of this, among countless others, is, that in the earliest MS. of the composition I have been describing, the words of a Latin hymn are adapted to the notes; the tokens of which adaptation are that the Latin text is written under the English, and that, having no words for the burden, it is insufficient for the music. Ecclesiastical appropriation of this piece is of a parity with the practice of Thomas, Archbishop of York, in the eleventh century, who adapted devotional verses to every

secular tune that became popular; and with the practice of Richard, Bishop of Ossory, in the fourteenth century, of whose exercises in Latinity to this effect several specimens are extant.

The *Tournament of Tottenham*, a metrical romance of the reign of Edward II., shows in the following allusion—

In all the corners of the house
Was melody delicious
Of Six-men's Songs—

that "Sumer is ioumen in," or other pieces of similarly complicated structure, had general acceptance in the first years of the fourteenth century. It is not to be supposed, however, that in those remote times, any more than at present, six singers were always at hand for the performance of a piece of such extensive requirements. Were other proof failing, the likelihood of the case would furnish ample evidence of this canon having been sung, as very frequently were the catches of more recent days, by a single voice, either with or without instrumental accompaniment; and thus it is to be classed among our national melodies. This brings us to the consideration of the national melodies of our British Isles, and particularly of England, because, while we have acknowledged the existence and the beauty of the tunes of our sister nations, it has been our grievous fashion to ignore those which are peculiarly our own. It is not here minutely to define the term "national melody," whose general signification is, I believe, generally understood, if doctors sometimes differ as to its special application. Enough to premise that I refer by it to tunes which are sung by the people for the tunes' sake, who find in them an utterance of their own humours, tempers, and emotions, and who love them for their truthfulness to this expression, regardless of their authorships, or even of their ever having been written down, and learning them commonly from person to person, from mouth to ear. My quest has been constantly in vain for such melodies belonging to southern nations, and even in Germany, except the Choral tunes of the Lutheran Church, I can meet with but few that seem not, like the melodies of Italy and Spain, to be extempore variations upon some fixed routine of harmony, which are as quickly forgotten as they are easily remembered, and which bear no intrinsic or recorded proof of more than two generations' endurance. The wondrously beautiful melodies of Ireland, those few airs that are genuinely Scotch, and some admirable Welsh tunes, tell all their own tale of loveliness to the world, and exact its universal recognition. It is our English fortune, and it should be our English pride, to possess a greater number of national tunes, of a greater diversity of character and expression, than any nation upon earth; and this, I maintain, more than all the evidences which have too long been sealed of musical scholarship in this country, more than the long list of once respected native-born musicians, proves that the English people have music truly at heart, and only need quittance from the prejudice which has depressed them during the last century and a half to enable them to resume their pristine national musical character.

The *Fayrfax MS.* shows the advanced state of part-writing here at the time of the Tudor accession; and, by necessary inference, indicates the state of taste to which such writing could be offered. It comprises vocal pieces by several composers, mostly of a pastoral character, which are remarkable for general fitness to the nature of the words, for melodious grace and even modernness of phraseology, for clearness and freedom of rhythm, and for quite as few aberrations from the strict path of musical syntax as any contemporaneous productions that have come within my reach.

The pieces of concerted vocal music designated "*King Henry's Mirth*," and the record of Sir Peter Carew's great favour with "*bluff King Hal*" on account of his effective participation with the monarch himself in their performance, prove to us what kind of pastime diverted the court of England at the beginning of the sixteenth century, before the King's conjugal perplexities turned his thoughts from healthful exercise and social recreation to matters in Church and State for which some may think he was less naturally qualified. These pieces are defined as *Threemen's* or *Freemen's* Songs, which definition apparently refers them, in shape if not in substance, to the days of the bold Hereward and his two nephews,—I mean that if these actual pieces were not sung by the merry men of the Fens before the coming of William the Conqueror, they are in the form and of the character of the songs of that era—a supposition resulting from a comparison of the music with the remarks of our earliest poets and writers on the people's customs. The word *Free-men* has, of a truth, puzzled many an inquirer into its signification: some have supposed it a corruption of the compound *Three-men*; some, to denote the free or jovial character of the men who took pleasure in such music; and one venturesome eighteenth-century editor printed a few specimens with the name of *Freemen* as that of their composer. So far as they speak for themselves, it can only be adduced that they are all for three male voices, and all of a hilarious character.

That Henry VIII. studied music was essential to his youthful preparation for the archbishopric of Canterbury. It was then essential for the Primate, as for all Church ministers under him, thoroughly to understand music; whereas it now suffices that the Archbishop of Canterbury confers musical degrees. That Henry prosecuted this study after his brother's death had changed his destiny and removed the necessity for his musical scholarship, and that he attained to high productive and executive skill, shows the bent of his inclination, and throws a strong light upon the taste for art in his time. A reflector of this light, which certainly augments its distinctness, is the fact that the earliest publication of secular music in this country, bearing date 1580, is a collection of concerted pieces by various composers, printed in separate vocal parts. The printing in separate parts is a silent but resistless testimony to those parts having been required for performance; and the indispensability of the accomplishment of sight-singing to a gentleman is significantly shown in

Skelton's humorous poem of *Bowge at Court*, wherein the hero thus implores for instruction :—

Wolde to God it wolde please you some day
A balade boke before me for to laye,
And lerne me for to synge, re, mi, fa, sol,
And when I fayle, bobbe me on the noll.

The continuance of the practice in courtly society of choral singing is attested by the multiplication of works to feed the general desire. Few are now familiar with the compositions in this class of Elizabeth's early days ; but one such example as the choral song, " In going to my naked bed," of Richard Edwards, certifies the poetical feeling and technical proficiency of the artists, and the appreciative and executive power of the amateurs, to have been of a very high order at this epoch.

Detractors of our native musicianship, who have been unable to dispute the sterling merit of our madrigal composers, have sought to trace this to the example of Italian works imported into England. Dates are dull witnesses, but they cannot be suborned, and their evidence outweighs any amount of speculative argument. A merchant named Young brought over some choice specimens of Italian art, which, with translated words, he published under the collective title of *Musica Transalpina*, in 1578 ; the piece I have named (because of frequent occurrence at modern concerts), and very many of the same structure by Byrd and other masters, were written here before the date of Young's importation. Unquestionably music progressed among the English, as it did among the Flemish and Italian composers, and the works produced in the seventeenth century were consequently far in advance of those written before the middle of the sixteenth : the natural course of art development is then the cause of the remarkable eminence of Morley, Dowland, Weelkes, Wilbye, Gibbons, and their compatriots, among the European musicians of the age ; the highest efforts of their fellow-artists beyond seas may have stimulated these men's endeavour, but were not the pattern by which they wrought. On the other hand, how much may foreigners have learned from our countrymen when John Cooper and Peter Phillips, under the Italianised names of Giovanni Coperario and Pietro Filippi, were among the best-esteemed members of the Roman school ; when the famous Dr. John Bull closed his life in Amsterdam ; when the compositions of John Dowland were printed in eight Continental cities during the life of the author, and when the services of this worthy were besought by Christian IV. of Denmark of our James I., who was, according to Fuller, "unwillingly willing" that the distinguished composer and Lutenist should enrich with his presence a foreign court.

In Thomas Morley's *Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, 1597, we find evidence of the same necessity for musicianship in gentle society that is proved, by the quaint passage I have given from Skelton, to have prevailed three reigns earlier. The book is framed in dialogues

between a country gentleman and his court friend, to whom he relates his disgrace in being unable to sing a part when the music books were handed round to the company in which he was recently present, and who undertakes therefore to induct him into the mysteries of the art, and relieve him thus from future embarrassment—the sequel being the course of instruction.

To sing from book was, in the olden time, necessary among the educated class, who had accordingly their madrigals, ballets, and part-songs; but though an essential of good breeding, its practice was not the peculiar privilege of the wealthy. Let the people's habit attest this, of singing not only our beautiful national tunes, but compositions of involved construction. Such is the Roundel or Round, called also Catch when the words have a comic tendency. Thus, when Sir John Norman, in 1458, first broke through the primal custom of a land procession along the strand of the river and through the village of Charing to take his oaths at Westminster as Lord Mayor of London, the Thames watermen had their roundel to celebrate his honouring their element with his civic pageant. "Row the boat, Norman," was sung on stream and on shore by any three men of the water, or of the land, who met in good-fellowship from that time forward. This piece is the type of a countless species, and we have best reason for believing that the singing of rounds and catches was, for ages, the recreation of rustic labourers, town artisans, and servants of all denominations.

While such was the musicality of gentle and simple, the institutions for the care and culture of the art in England, and the public and private appointments with the duties these entailed for its practitioners, are quite as worthy of note, and quite as evidential of the high esteem accorded to music and musicians.

In chivalric times, the order of minstrels had its *Rex Ministrallorum*, as that of heralds its *Rex Heraldorum*, and the one functionary commanded neither higher respect nor higher reward than the other—the Herald King-at-Arms than the King of the Minstrels. The Herald's College perpetuates to the present day the offices of its order, and implies their value to men and morals; the minstrels' fraternity has passed out of being. Let fond imagination trust that the preservation of the former makes up in the welfare of society for the latter's extinction.

England is the only country that recognizes the culture of music in its universities of learning. Alfred instituted a musical professorship in his foundation of the University of Oxford in 866, the first representative of which was John of St. David's, and the latest is Sir F. A. G. Osely, who now fills the time-honoured chair. The earliest graduate in this faculty whose title has been traced is Henry Habington, created Bachelor of Music at Cambridge, in 1468; and any one knows how frequently musical degrees have been conferred by our universities since his time. The Doctorate, be it remembered, received by Spohr, by Mendelssohn, and by Schumann, from German universities, is a degree in philosophy

complimentarily bestowed upon men eminent in either of the arts, music, poetry, or painting.

Every city had, of old, its band of musicians. We moderns have still our Waits, whose assumed denomination is their excuse for disturbing our sleep on winter nights and appealing for Christmas-boxes on St. Stephen's morning. Their braying upon cornets and ophicleides of Italian opera airs and Christy Minstrel melodies is the melancholy remnant of the ancient city custom for the waites, or watch, to pass on their rounds with harmonious piping, or with the sweet sound of song breathing a benison on the sleepers. Not only in the royal court, but in the house of every nobleman and gentleman, there was, down to the Stuart times, an appointed band of musicians, whose functions were to compose and to perform for the diversion of their lord and his guests. The small potentates of Germany have adopted this practice, each of whom maintains his Kapellmeister with an ample artist band; and it is not the only practice of our forefathers for the honour and promotion of music which has been adopted in the Fatherland from the precedent of the Mother country. Financialists represent that the pecuniary means of our present nobility surpass those of their ancestors, and exceed those of the small German potentates; thus it seems that, in respect to the support of musical art, the more means the less meaning.

Thus far I have spoken of music in England when chroniclers and poets-described the land as "fair," and accounted the people as "merry." We come now to the days when England was first called "Old," and when, with her acknowledgment of age, she put on sad-colour. It was an eventful year, 1641, when this term, Old England, appears first to have been used in print, one-and-twenty years after our American colony of North Virginia received the name of New England, and the epithet referred not then to the positive age of the island parent so much as to the comparative youth of her Transatlantic offspring. It was in 1641 that Strafford was beheaded, and that bishops were deprived of their place in Parliament, when the King's interest and the people's were divided, and when the Civil War was ripe for bursting. The gallant, stirring, jovial song with Martin Parker's racy words, "When the King enjoys his own again," is cited by after writers as "a tune of '41;" and this song did signal service in keeping alive the spirit of the Cavaliers so long as they had any king to fight for, and it aided not a little towards the bringing back of his son; nay, when James III. twice strove to dispossess the Hanoverians of the English throne, this notable ditty was as a watchword among his partisans, and it is thus a more veritable Jacobite relic than all the Scottish "Charlie" songs that have been fabricated since the final expulsion of the Stuarts. The old troublous times are well pictured in Scott's *Woodstock*, where he makes the rattling, reckless Wildrake—"a true tantiwyter"—constantly attune his loyalty to the strains of this memorable melody.

It has been falsely alleged that the decadence of music in this country

is due to the Puritan influence. It is under the Commonwealth, however, that several facts have date which bear strongly upon the development at least of the secular branch of the art.

In 1651, Playford published the first edition of the *Dancing Master*, which is the earliest printed collection of our dance tunes, with descriptions of the figures: a work of infinite importance, since we owe to it the preservation of many of the most beautiful airs of our songs in those of the dances that are named after them. Hence, it is clear that there was dancing to very pretty tunes in the days of the Roundheads.

In 1652, the same publisher issued his *Select Ayres and Dialogues*, which collection of vocal music, by various composers, comprises the first two pieces to which the definition "Glee" was ever applied. I pause upon this, because the glee is claimed as a class of composition peculiar to England, and because the claim is even admitted by those most forward to deny our musical pretensions. The embryo of the glee is discernible in the Three-men's Songs already often alluded to, and in the pieces contained in the Fayrfax MS. The signification of its title is, however, expressly shown in the two examples to which this is first applied, they both being of a convivial, mirthful, literally gleesome character, in theme and treatment. Of one of these, "Bring in the cold chine," since it heads a class that is allowed to be specially English, it may be interesting to note that its composer was Jack Wilson, the original personator of Amiens in *As You Like It*, and probably the author of the original music of his songs, the boon companion of Ben Jonson at his Apollo Club, and afterwards doctor and professor of music in the University of Oxford.

In 1656, at Rutland House, in Aldersgate Street, Sir William Davenant gave the first public performance of an English opera. This was five years prior to the patent of the Academie Royale de Musique, which licensed the first performance of French operas; and twenty-two years before the production of Thiel's *Adam and Eva*, which was the first opera publicly performed in Germany. The work is called *The Siege of Rhodes*, and the book of the words is extant, but not so the music, which was the composition of several masters. It is equally remarkable, since quite as important, that the character of Ianthé in this opera was sustained by Mrs. Henry Colman, who was the first female that ever performed in public in this country. We owe, then, to Puritan times the perpetuation of our oldest national melodies, and the origination of our glee, our opera, and our pleasurable privilege of hearing female singers.

The Protector himself proved most strongly his own musical tendencies. He engaged John Hingston, a musician of good esteem, to teach his daughters, and assigned him a pension of 100*l.* a year, which, at the different value of money, was then worth three times its present amount. He frequented musical parties at Hingston's house, at one or more of which Sir Roger l'Estrange assisted upon the bass viol, who, in consequence of his participation in these performances, was nicknamed "Old

Noll's Fiddler " by his Royalist friends. Sir Roger, be it observed, who subsequently established, if not originated, public journalism in England, was greatly prejudiced after the Restoration by this cognomen and the associations that induced it. To return to Cromwell: he was, on one occasion, so much pleased with the singing of a certain James Quin, that, for the sake of this, he restored him to an Oxford scholarship of which the Commissioners had deprived him on account of his adherence to the Royal cause. Even Heath, who was engaged after the Restoration to write a calumniating biography of Cromwell—even Heath, whose corruptions are so gross that Carlyle always prefixes the epithet "Carrien" to his name—even Carrion Heath compares the subject of his vilification with "wicked Saul," who, when the evil spirit was upon him, sought to exorcise this with the charm of harmonious sounds; and states that "he respected, or at least pretended to love, all ingenious or eximious persons in any art, whom he procured to be sent or brought to him."

We now come to the period of the Restoration. Whether the exile of Charles II. be the worst subject for regret, or his return, it was at least a natural consequence of his years of residence in a foreign country that he should be imbued with foreign tastes as with foreign morals. Of the latter it boots not here to speak; of the former it may be said that his institution, registered in nursery rhyme, of "four-and-twenty fiddlers," of whom John Banister was the leader, if an imitation of the "Grands Violons" of Louis XIV., or of the "petits violons" organized to give scope to the talent of Lully, it was an imitation in form only, the substance of a royal orchestra having been an appanage of the court of England since the days of Elizabeth, if not from time immemorial. Further, though some foreign musicians were attracted hither by the King's welcome, they made no stand against the brilliant constellation of native artists who still give lustre to the age in which their genius swayed the tide of fashion. French biographers state that Cambert came to London after his reverses at home, reproduced one of his operas, and died here; but no notice of his presence has been found in English annals. Unquestionably Grabut was in England, and composed the allegorical opera of *Albion and Albanus* to Dryden's verses. We know also that Draghi and Pignani spent some years in England. But what of this knowledge? What of the certainty that a score of such Frenchmen and Italians were among us, who failed to touch the hearts of the people whom they addressed, or to stamp their impress upon the development of their art? Compare these names with that of Henry Lawes, whose brother William, also a composer, had fallen at the siege of Chester, when Charles I. wore mourning in respect for his memory and in honour of his talent; Henry Lawes, whose exquisite powers of musical expression and declamation are eulogized by Milton and Waller, and whose esteem was so high that the approved poets of the time and the young nobles who courted poetical glory were emulous of his setting music to their verses. Compare these names with that of Mathew Locke, who, though the music be lost which

he composed for Macbeth, and though the music in Macbeth be not his which is commonly accredited to him, wrote the opera of *Psyche* prior to Lully's of the same name, wrote other works for the stage, wrote for the Romanist Church as organist to the Queen, wrote vocal and instrumental music for the Chamber, and wrote glees for the people. Compare these names with that of Pelham Humphreys, whom Pepys describes as "keeping time to the music," (or, in modern phrase, conducting) at Whitehall in the year when, at the age of nineteen, he wrote the music for Dryden's spoliation of the *Tempest*, and therein proved that the lyrical art of the age was superior to the poetical. Compare these names with that of Henry Purcell, who was the greatest musician of his own age, and who, in his wonderful insight into the latest modern resources of harmony, and his delicate application of the powers of melodic expression, as far exceeded the past as he anticipated the future of his art. Not to look further, such comparison will fully account for the non-influence of Charles's foreign proclivities upon the national lyrical muse.

A brief allusion must suffice to the institution of public concerts, which were first given during this reign. Banister, before mentioned, was the originator of musical performances to which an audience paid for admission. These were held at a large room near the gate of the Temple in Whitefriars, where a curtain screened the diffident singers and players from the public, who paid to hear, but not to see them. At these concerts ale and tobacco were permitted to the audience, and they thus stand as precedents for the Music Hall entertainments that have an egregious effect on the taste of our present day. Prior to Banister's concerts, there were music-clubs held in several places—"a lane at the back of Paul's," the "Mitre Tavern," near the west front of the cathedral, and elsewhere. These were of a social nature, the members being all executants, and resembled, so far as possible, with the discrepancy of time and place, the Liedertafel at present in vogue in Germany; so that here we find another appropriation of English practice in the musical habits of our cousins-German. It is noteworthy that the members of these clubs were principally of what are now called the working-classes, since this proves that technical musicianship was still common among the people; and it is further noteworthy that persons of daintier habits and ampler means were co-members with them, since this proves that with men of musical tastes, fellowship in its gratification superseded tailors' distinctions. Lastly, let me observe that the first public room devoted specially to musical performances, without the alloy of physical refection, was opened in 1680, stood at the corner of Villiers and Duke Streets, York Buildings, Strand, where the "Griffin" public-house now occupies its site, and was the resort of music lovers of all classes. Let me prove from this, that since King Charles's time, when the custom began to decline among our nobility of maintaining each a musical establishment for his private gratifications, musical performances in concert-rooms have been accessible to the public.

The musical faith of England—and I use the word "faith" in its deepest and fullest sense—which the asperity of the Protectorate could not crush, and the frivolity of the Restoration could not dissipate, received its first shock in Queen Anne's reign, and lapsed, through indifference and scepticism, into downright infidelity, under the administration of that good lady's Hanoverian successors. It was during her sovereignty that the first experiment of Italian opera was made in this country; and it is to its subsequent establishment as one of the institutions of the metropolis, and the gross affectation which this bred and nourished, that the degradation of art in England is wholly to be ascribed. At an earlier time, some sprigs of nobility returned from foreign travel, and some satellites of the Merry Monarch, pretended to a pleasure from performances in the Italian tongue which those in our own beautiful language failed to yield them; and they were justly satirized by Henry Lawes, who composed a song which obtained a wide acceptance, and which he afterwards showed to have been set to an index of the first lines of a collection of Italian poems, none of which bore any reference to the others. Not less absurd than this production, was the form of the first dramatic representations in which Italian singers appeared in London. The characters in these were divided between the exotic and our native executants, and the representatives of the two nationalities sang respectively in their own language, so that a question and its answer were in different tongues, and a lover and his mistress exchanged their vows in words that were unintelligible to each other. Music, like the other arts, has its cycles and its seasons; and, as there was a lapse in the pictorial greatness of Italy after the painters of the Cinque Cento, and in the literary splendour of England after the poets of the Elizabethan era, there was such a torpor in the musical genius of our country after the musicians who wrought side by side with Purcell. Hence, the hybrid performances just described were unopposed—the single champion of our secular music, apart from the Church composers of the day, being one Clayton, who was only distinguished for his utter want of distinction, and thus was powerless to check their progress. These libels on common sense and travesties of dramatic art were presented here in 1707 and the two following years; but in 1710, as the *Spectator* humourously expresses it, the fashionable world was relieved from the trouble of "understanding half an opera," for the performance was then given entirely in Italian. Even with this release from all mental exertion, the said fashionable world yielded but a questionable vitality to the new entertainment, which had its vicissitudes of worse and better fortune, and took not permanent root until its patronage became a political, more than an art demonstration, and the affectation that usurped the dominion of taste passed all bounds of civil decency.

Was it love of art, for instance, which induced the Prince of Wales to espouse the cause of an Opposition opera-house to that supported by

George II., when the quarrels between the King and his son ran so high as to cause the public advertisement in the daily journals that any person who attended the Prince's levées would not be received at St. James's; when the members of the King's and Prince's parties frequented respectively the one theatre or the other; and when it was a sign of Whiggery or Toryism for one to be found at the opera in the Haymarket or at that in Lincoln's Inn Fields? Was it love of art that induced the adherents of the royal George or the princely Frederick to evince their lordly breeding and gentle manners in tearing down the play-bills from the door of the theatre patronised by the rival faction? Was it love of art that induced ladies of quality to invite large assemblies from which it would have been as much a political offence as a breach of etiquette to be absent, on the nights when a new singer or a new composition was to be brought forward at the opera-house of the opposition party, in order to withdraw its most eminent supporters from among the audience? Was it love of art that justified a young lady's defence in the Court of Equity of her failure in a marriage contract—and this, too, on a 14th of February, of all days in the year, that her suitor in love and law had openly declared his dislike of Farinelli's singing, and that she could not become the life associate of such a monster? Was it love of art that excited another lady in high life at the close of one of the same singer's feats of vocal dexterity, to throw herself forward from her box, and casting up her arms and eyes towards the ceiling of the theatre, rapturously to ejaculate, "One God! one Farinelli!" Love and art had as little concern in such extravagances as reason and nature.

What was the immediate effect of the unfortunate fashion which has infected the taste and the truth of a hundred and fifty years? It at first provoked the sarcasm of the choicest wits of the time, and so enriched our literature with many a humorous sally, best remembered of which is that of Richard Byrom, erroneously attributed to Swift, epigrammatically commemorating the feud between the Buononciniists and the Handelists, and closing with the couplet—

Strange that such difference should be
"Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

This was, likely enough, an advantage, but one perhaps scarcely sufficient for letters, to counterbalance the concomitant evils to a sister art.

The worst of these evils is that our aristocracy and those who ape its manners, led by the example of our foreign rulers and the foreign court by whom this was strengthened, took to ignoring everything Anglican in connection with music. Our executive and productive abilities were unacknowledged by the classes of high birth and wealthy means, and even our noble English language was depreciated, stigmatized as unavailable for music—the language in which the thundering announcement "He hath triumphed gloriously" makes every hearer tremble with joyous awe, while

it proclaims that Handel knew how to accentuate it,—the language in which the pathetic adjuration "Beheld, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow!" draws tears from every one who has Christian feelings or human sympathies, while it demonstrates that Mr. Sims Reeves knows how to enunciate it. How much has been lost in the works that might have been written had not the light and warmth of recognition been denied to English genius, cannot be conjectured. How much has been lost in the pleasure that might have cheered society, had not our private singers preferred the Italian to their own tongue until they have become as incompetent to pronounce the one as unable to understand the other, might be more easily computed. This loss is, however, obvious; Handel frittered away his time and his genius in England from his twenty-fifth until his forty-eighth year, in the production of undramatic operas for the exhibition of effete singers in Italian, before his *Esther* and his *Acis and Galatea* were publicly performed. Not one of his many Italian operas ever will, ever can be given again; the latest representation of any one of them having been that of *Giulio Cesare*, by command of George III., in 1787, when it had already become an antiquarian curiosity; and, had Handel continued to feed the fashion with such pieces of purely temporary interest, his labours, if not his name, would now be unknown. The series of his deathless compositions to English words, sacred and secular, which are the pillars of his eternal fame, dates from the public performance of *Esther* and *Acis and Galatea* in 1782; and all time has therefore lost the treasures which must have sprung from his giant powers during the twenty-three years of life at which most men's minds are at the strongest, had not the follies and vices of the day prevailed against him and us and futurity.

The foundation of the Madrigal Society, in 1741, proves that the anti-nationalism of the time was limited to the foreign court and its surroundings. John Inmyns, who originated this yet existing but greatly modified institution, was an attorney whom circumstances had reduced to gain his bread in the capacity of a lawyer's clerk. His madrigalian associates were Spitalfields weavers, small tradesmen, and artisans, all of the humbler classes. John Hawkins, the musical historian, was a member in his younger days, when his condition was little better than that of the founder; but he left the society when he rose in his profession, before he was appointed magistrate of Bow Street and dignified with knighthood. Mark this as indicative of the social changes which fourscore years had effected: at the music-clubs in the days of Charles II., gentle and simple met for the common practice and enjoyment of the art they loved, but at the Madrigal Society in George II.'s time persons of better means shrank from the fellowship of their poorer brethren, and sacrificed music to taste. The first meetings of the society were held at the sign of the Twelve Bells in Bride Lane. These took place once a week, and a quarterly subscription of three shillings was the fee for membership, which included the

cost of a supper on each occasion. Frugal fellows these must have been, the first of the Madrigal Society, who could sing and sup together at the rate of something under threepence a time ; but they were right musical in their frugality, having a strict law that forbade, under a penalty of sixpence, supping during singing hours, so as to ensure respect for the object of their assembly and the utmost edification from its pursuit. The admission test for membership was the requirement to sing at sight any piece from the society's library ; and this test was administered between the first and second acts of the evening's performance, then and there, in hearing of all the members. The society had implicit belief in the choral music of the olden time, and contemned the foreign trivialities of the day as degrading to art and derogatory to England. It was instituted, therefore, to preserve the former in substance and in practice. The Madrigal Society made many migrations from tavern to tavern, and underwent many upheavings in its rate of subscription. It has now degenerated into a community of gentlemen presided over by an Indian Maharajah, who hold eight monthly meetings at the Freemasons' Tavern during the year, at which dining is the first essential, and music follows with the dessert, in abnegation of the primitive law against simultaneous supping and singing, and who pay, besides the charge for dinner, an annual subscription of more pounds than the shillings of the original quarterage, when the gatherings were six and a half times more frequent ; but it is still a monument of the musical love and skill of the people proper in the very year 1741, when Handel wrote *Messiah* for Dublin because London did not countenance him, and he was thus compelled to seek in Ireland for opportunities which he could not obtain here.

Of a totally different constitution from that of the Madrigal Society are the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club, the Glee Club, and the Conceniores Sodales, founded respectively in 1762, in 1787, and in 1798 : the first by some of the gentry who had a fancy to spice their cakes and ale with the savour of song ; the second by Drs. Arnold and Calcott, for the purpose of drawing the attention, and thus the patronage, of the wealthy to their art ; and the third by William Horsley, under the god-fathership of the scholarly Samuel Webbe, with the more professional, if not more practical, object of promoting vocal composition.

The glee was now developed into a special class of writing, as distinguished from the madrigal, the ballet, and the part-song, but it lost its etymological gleesome character and became more frequently heroic, pastoral, amatory, or even pathetic, than convivial ; nay, the anomalous epithet "serious glee" is not of rare application ; as who should say lugubrious mirth or doleful jollity, and so at best make but a sad joke or a sorry jest.

Upon the whole, although the glee be admitted as a class of composition essentially English, it is a class in which we have no great occasion for pride, since, as a class, the excellent pieces which form

the minority of its instances are too exceptional to give it specific dignity. Musical England has been "under a cloud"—I confess while I bewail it—ever since she has been governed by kings and queens and princes who have spoken German as their native speech, or been the sons or daughters of German fathers or German mothers or both; and the English glee may be at best regarded as a rainbow on the cloud, giving promise of the renewed fertility of our native land after the drying up of the deluge.

The nature of the glee indicates, to some extent, that of the clubs established for its professed cultivation. The first object of all these clubs was to dine. The next was to listen to, not to participate in, the performance of glees, rounds, and catches. The next was to award prizes for compositions in these classes, which prizes—as a matter of course—have not always been gained by the most meritorious pieces offered in competition. The character of these pieces is, in many cases, such as to suit the after-dinner temperament of that order of gentlemen who considered themselves unworthy of the title if they went to bed with less than two bottles of wine within their waistcoats. It is vain-glorious, mock-heroic, bibulous, or sentimental, so as to fit it to the several stages of bottledom of those who heard, and the several degrees of inward complacency of those who sang it. The facility of the production of such pieces is as clearly evidenced as the fecundity of the composer, in the fact that on one occasion Dr. Calcott sent into the Catch Club the extraordinary number of one hundred several works to compete for its annual prize: a fact which so incommoded the umpires that the Club prohibited any candidate from submitting more than twelve pieces on any future occasion. Ladies had no admission to the festivities of these institutions, and the treble parts, when there were any in the glees, were sung by boys, who, it is to be hoped, derived better musical than they could moral advantages from their share in the evening's proceedings.

All this while, from Queen Anne's time downwards, when the court and fashion had their Italian opera, when the workers of the town had their madrigalian suppers, with an occasional country excursion, of which music made the chief pleasure, and the festive gentry made the patronage of glee-singing a pretext for their convivial meetings, our song-writers, however disesteemed, were adding to the nation's wealth by the multiplication of their simple melodies, successively characteristic of the days in which they were written; and they thus kept alive in the heart of the people the enfeebled but never yet extinguished love of music. Each and every of these composers has contributed his store to the joyousness of Englishmen, and thus to their welfare.

Had I space to comment upon each, I might name many musicians, productive and exaptive, whose talent brightened the early years of the present century; who would be better regarded here had they been born elsewhere, and better known in other countries had not their doings, like

their birthplace, been shut out from the European continent by the seas that surround us. More than any of these is honoured that of Sir H. R. Bishop, who made himself master of the circumstances of the moment, met the time's requirements when no one else had the skill or the will to do so, and in a few years of rapid productivity, such as has rarely been matched, planted a reputation that will long be kept green by the multitude of favourite pieces which still nourish its root.

Bishop domiciled the glee upon the stage, restored to it its instrumental accompaniment and its dialogical, if not its dramatic, character, and gave to it, if not also restored—for my belief is that ladies shared the performance of the first Commonwealth specimens—the advantage of female voices. The voice of woman is to music what her smile is to society: it gives verve and clearness to the most salient points of the harmony, and brightens the melodious surface. The usage of the theatre induced the first employment of women singers in Bishop's concerted music; the music being appropriated to them was available for private performance, and society, reversing the proverb, showed that where there is a way there is a will, in adopting the music directly it came within reach. It is too true that Bishop retarded the re-awakening among us of the musicality which the manners of the country under the four Georges had lulled. He retarded this by flattering the ignorance to which the public was degraded, in mangling the masterpieces of foreign schools to reduce them to the level of untaught comprehension, instead of teaching the people through the gentle lesson of their winning beauty; and he further retarded it by contracting his own genial capabilities within the Chinese shoe of convention, instead of permitting their natural expansion so that they might draw upwards the popular intelligence. The world's gratitude is due to him, however, for having socialised the musical art, for having given the opportunity and thus revived the custom, for women and men to conjoin together for mutual pleasure in musical performance. It is, I feel, largely if not wholly due to the charm and to the practicability of this composer's glees, that family meetings for music became common, then extended themselves into minglings of several families, and have now grown into the greater and smaller choral institutions that aid to elevate the nation by disseminating a knowledge and rekindling the ancient love of art in every city and town, if not yet in every village and hamlet throughout the country.

It is more than thirty years ago that madrigal singing, with its old choral multiplicity of voices, became a feature which always proves to be most interesting at public concerts. Then followed the importation and instant adoption of German part-songs, which are reproductions, I will not say imitations, of the precise form and character of those that were written and sung in England two hundred and fifty years before. The revival of madrigals incited our young musicians to contrapuntal study. The revival of part songs stimulated their freer thought to seek expression, and to find

it, in modern phraseology, characterized by the modern harmonic resources from which this springs.

The Philharmonic Society was established in 1818, and it has done much to arouse the musical sense of its limited number of subscribers. It has done yet more for art in eliciting, by express commission, from Beethoven, from Mendelssohn, and from several other masters, some of the best of their works. The existence of this Society and the result of its operations are alone nugatory of the aspersion which it is the aim of these remarks to contradict. A shorter-lived and less respected institution, the Society of British Musicians, began, in 1884, its good work of encouragement to native artists and guidance to those who knew not how to appreciate them, by its defiance of the prejudice which had spread by this time from the upper to the lower classes. Musical organisations have multiplied in later years with growing benefit to the musicianship of the country, most important, though not most successful, among which have been those expressly devoted to the lyrical drama in our native language. It must not be overlooked, as an important incident in the art history of these later times, that in 1822 was established, and in the following year was opened, our Royal Academy of Music, which gave a strong impetus to musical study and has proved a valuable arena for its pursuit. Thence have emanated musicians that adorn every department of the art, and there germs of musical promise are in course of cultivation.

Mr. John Hullah enjoys a deserved esteem for his share, under the auspices of the Council of Education, in the popular culture of the last eight-and-thirty years; but it is perhaps a question whether the large assumptions of persons, otherwise well educated, who have gleaned a minimum of musical knowledge through the means he has rendered easily accessible, be not an evil to art far greater than the good that has been wrought among the common people by his teaching, and that of his pupil-teachers.

One more institution demands mention because it begins to command a very wide respect. This is the Tonic Sol-Fa Association, which, however peculiar its instructional means, has manifestly the effect of disseminating musical knowledge among the masses—an effect mainly due to the zealous activity of its leaders. Let me adduce, with thankful pleasure, a fact that is more than a year old in evidence of the useful working of these friends of art. At a multitudinous assembly of the disciples of this singular system, a piece of music which had been composed for the occasion, and had not until then been seen by human eyes save those of the writer and the printers, was handed forth to the members of the chorus there present, and then, before an audience furnished at the same time with copies to test the accuracy of the performance, forty-five hundred singers sang it at first sight in a manner to fulfil the highest requirements of the severest judges. The pretence is too foolish to have any weight, that in a town where such a feat was possible, there was not a vast amount of fondness

and aptitude for music among the public at large, from whom, or from its lower ranks chiefly, the members were gathered of this ready-reading choir. During these last hundred and fifty years, the royal and the noble of the land have despised our language and disregarded the music associated with it, and the world at large has followed in their footsteps, until their affected mincing gait has shuffled out of use the firm honest tread of an Englishman. The people are now beginning to think for themselves in defiance of the prejudice which, from within or from without, has overgrown them like a fungus; and at their volunteer musical drillings, as at their volunteer rifle drillings, they are gaining power and confidence to stand erect and march by the strength of their own conviction.

Meantime, our Italian Opera has, for a second time, become twofold, and so, by force of rivalry and partisanship, more than doubled its pernicious art influence. A considerable minority of the composers whose works are there performed are Italians. A minority of the compositions were originally set to the Italian language, and those which are translated suffer materially from the traduction, in the sound, the accent, and the very sense of the misappropriated words, and in the perversion of the author's design in misfitting them to the uses of the Italian stage. A large majority of the vocalists who present these distorted works of art are not Italians, and the several German, French, Swedish, American, and English singers—who some of them may not understand the language they have to utter, and many of them cannot pronounce it—would be heard to better advantage each in his own native tongue, if not in one that was familiar to his audience.

It would now be a pleasure to speak of the English musicians of the matured and of those of the rising generation who are at present working in the midst of us. A few words, however, would not do justice to their separate claims upon general sympathy with their various endeavours in the cause they have on hand and at heart; and other reasons besides the bounds of space render it impossible to enlarge upon their merits. I will only aver that such men are, and refer to public experience of recent years for warrant of the country's right to trust in them.

My allusions have been all to vocal compositions, and chiefly to vocal composers, because such works are generally more accessible than the instrumental music of former times; and such men have more directly addressed the nation at large than those who wrote for the gratification of persons skilled in some particular department of musical art. I have spoken only of secular music, as being specially the music of the people. English Church music is distinct alike from the Roman and the Lutheran. The excellent merit of that produced during the first two centuries after the Reformation, before Hanoverian influence demoralized as much the Church as its art-accessories, is only unacknowledged where it is unknown, and only unadmired where it is misunderstood.

Two obstacles impede our recovery of that character which formerly

was as freely accorded to us by stranger nations as it was fondly nourished at home: our character for music, whose dark age set in in the very days when our character for painting began to dawn—the days of Hogarth, Thornhill, and Ramsay. The first of these obstacles is the belief in the fallacy that the English language is not good for singing, and the consequent affectation of our private, and alas! some of our public vocalists, to prefer singing in Italian, by the injurious practice of which they forfeit the ability to make themselves interesting or even intelligible when they attempt the enunciation of their mother tongue. The other obstacle in the way of our musical resuscitation is the inefficient rudimentary instruction that too often clogs the after career of artists and amateurs. Ill educated in first principles, they are frequently incompetent to the simplest tasks of their art, though they pretend to feats of which well-schooled practitioners are diffident. It is not to be wondered at that taste is on a par with teaching, and that persons like bad music who know nothing of musical elements. This faulty tuition is not the consequence, but the cause of our low musical level, since it is not administered—would that I could say otherwise—only by English instructors.

These two serious obstacles must give way to the force of time, when the people will become regenerate, when the love and the talent natural to them will find free scope, when we shall no longer allow, and foreigners will no longer acquiesce in, the prejudice that "the English are not a musical people."

G. A. MACFARREN.



Theology in Extremis :

OR, A SOLILOQUY THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DELIVERED IN INDIA,
JUNE, 1857.

—•—

“The Mahometans would have spared life to any of their English prisoners who should consent to profess Mahometanism, by repeating the usual short formula ; but only one half-caste cared to save himself in that way.”—*Extract from a newspaper account of one of the Indian massacres.*

—•—

MORITURUS LOQUITUR.

I.

OF in the pleasant summer years,
Reading the tales of days bygone,
I have mused on the story of human tears,
All that man unto man has done—
Massacre, torture, and black despair—
Reading it all in my easy-chair.

II.

Passionate prayer for a minute's life ;
Tortured, crying for death as rest ;
Husband pleading for child or wife,
Pitiless stroke upon tender breast.
Was it all real as that I lay there
Lazily stretched on my easy-chair ?

III.

Could I believe in those hard old times
Here, in this safe luxurious age ?
Were the horrors invented to season rhymes,
Or truly is man so fierce in his rage ?
What could I suffer, and what could I dare ?
I who was bred to that easy-chair.

IV.

They were my fathers, the men of yore,
Little they recked of a cruel death ;
They would dip their hands in a heretic's gore,
They stood and burnt for a rule of faith.
What would I burn for, and whom not spare ?
I, who had faith in an easy-chair.

V.

Now do I see old tales are true,
 Here in the clutch of a savage foe ;
 Now shall I know what my fathers knew ;
 Bodily anguish and bitter woe,
 Naked and bound in the hot sun's glare,
 Far from my civilized easy-chair.

VI.

Now have I tasted and understood,
 That old-world feeling of mortal hate ;
 For the Mussulmans round us are keen for blood,
 They will kill us coolly—they do but wait ;
 While I—I would sell ten lives, at least,
 For one fair stroke at that devilish priest

VII.

Just in return for the kick he gave,
 Bidding me call on the prophet's name ;
 Even a dog by this may save
 Skin from the knife, and soul from the flame ;
 My soul ! if he can let the prophet burn it ;
 But life *is* sweet if a word may earn it.

VIII.

A bullock's death, and at thirty years !
 Just one phrase, and a man gets off it.
 Look at that mongrel clerk in his tears,
 Whining aloud the name of the prophet ;
 Only a formula easy to patter,
 And, God Almighty, what *can* it matter ?

IX.

"Matter enough," will my comrade say,
 Praying aloud here close at my side,
 "Whether you mourn in despair always,
 Cursed for ever by Christ denied ;
 Or whether you suffer a minute's pain
 All the reward of Heaven to gain."

X.

Not for a moment faltereth he,
 Sure of the promise and pardon of sin ;
 Thus did the martyrs die, I see,
 Little to lose and muckle to win ;
 Death means Heaven—he longs to receive it,
 But what shall I do if I don't believe it ?

XI.

Life is pleasant, and friends may be nigh,
 Fain would I speak one word and be spared;
 Yet I could be silent and cheerfully die
 If I were only sure God cared;
 If I had Faith, and were only certain
 That Light is behind that terrible curtain.

XII.

But what if He listeth nothing at all
 Of words a poor wretch in his terror may say,
 That mighty God who created all?
 Who meant us to live our appointed day,
 Who needs not either to bless or ban,
 Weaving the woof of an endless plan.

XIII.

He is the Reaper, and binds the sheaf,
 Shall not the season its order keep?
 Can it be changed by a man's belief?
 Millions of harvests still to reap.
 Will God reward, if I die for a creed,
 Or will He but pity, and sow more seed?

XIV.

Surely He pities who made the brain,
 When breaks that mirror of memories sweet,
 When the hard blow falleth, and never again
 Nerve shall quiver nor pulse shall beat.
 Bitter the vision of vanishing joys—
 Surely He pities when man destroys.

XV.

Here stand I on the ocean's brink,
 Who hath brought news of the further shore?
 How shall I cross it? Sail or sink,
 One thing is sure, I return no more.
 Shall I find haven, or aye shall I be
 Tossed in the depths of a shoreless sea?

XVI.

They tell fair tales of a far-off land,
 Of love rekindled, of forms renewed;
 There may I only touch one hand,
 Here life's ruin will little be rued;
 But the hand I have pressed, and the voice I have heard,
 To lose them for ever, and all for a word!

XVII.

Now do I feel that my heart must break,
 All for one glimpse of a woman's face;
 Swiftly the slumbering memories wake
 Odour and shadow of hour and place;
 One bright ray through the darkening past
 Leaps from the lamp as it brightens last,

XVIII.

Showing me summer in western land
 Now, as the cool breeze murmureth
 In leaf and flower—And here I stand
 In a plain all bare save the shadow of death,
 Leaving my life in its full noonday;
 And no one to know why I flung it away!

XIX.

Why? Am I bidding for glory's roll?
 I shall be murdered and clean forgot;
 Is it a bargain to save my soul?
 God, whom I trust in, bargains not.
 Yet for the honour of English race,
 May I not live or endure disgrace.

XX.

I must be gone to the crowd untold
 Of men by the cause which they served unknown,
 Who moulder in myriad graves of old,
 Never a story and never a stone
 Tells of the martyrs who die like me,
 Just for the pride of the old countree.

XXI.

Ay, but the word, if I could have said it,
 I by no terrors of hell perplex—
 Hard to be silent and get no credit
 From man in this world, or reward in the next.
 None to bear witness and reckon the cost
 Of the name that is saved by the life that is lost.

A. C. L.

The Victorial: A Story of an Old Spanish Rober.

THE *Victorial* one would imagine, by its high-sounding title, to be an epic poem, whereas it is simply a chronicle of the deeds and adventures of the *siempre vencedor, jamas vencido caballero*, Don Pedro Niño, Conde de Buelna, a valiant Spanish captain by sea and land, born about the year 1878. It was written by his *alferez*, or standard-bearer, Gutierre Diaz de Gamez, who was of the same age as himself, and entered into his service at twenty-three years of age, and never left his side from that time to his death; so that he was an eyewitness of all the actions he relates.

This story of the deeds of the Don Pedro Niño appears to have been composed at his own suggestion—at all events in his will he makes especial provision for the safe keeping of the manuscript as one of his most cherished possessions. It was, after the death of his countess, to be preserved for ever in the sacristy of the church of his town of Cigales, in the coffer of the treasury; and it was never to be allowed to be taken away, though it might be consulted on the spot. The original manuscript has, however, perished, but sundry manuscript copies remain. It was published, in a mutilated form, at Madrid in 1782, by Don Eugenio de Llaguno. Southey has made use of it in his *Lives of the British Admirals*. M. Viollet le Duc has taken from it a vivid description of French châteaux-life in the fourteenth century for his *Dictionnaire Raisonné du Mobilier Français*. Some portions of it have been published in Germany. The narrative of the exploits of its hero by sea has been of eminent use to naval archaeologists, and a translation, with excellent notes, has been published by the Comtes Albert de Circourt and Paymaigre at Paris, both known for their extensive acquaintance with old Castilian literature.

A perusal of the chronicle gives us a satisfactory assurance that the good *alferez* is a reliable witness for such events as came under his eye. He is singularly modest in speaking of himself, and, for a Spaniard, he is freer from national prejudice than any writer one can meet with, as is proved by the following estimate of the distinctive qualities of English, French, and Castilians:—

“The English decide a long time beforehand; they act with forethought and reflection. The French decide only in the fire of action; they are presumptuous and rash. The Castilians decide when the business is over; they are indolent and never tired of deliberation.” This is a blunt enough comment on the text, *Socorro de España siempre perdido por tarde*.

Some of the pages have especial interest for an English reader, since they contain an account of the plundering expedition which Pedro Niño made, in company with Messire Charles de Savoisy, along the English

coast, when they sacked St. Erth, Pool, Portland, and other places. The notions which the *alferes* has of the history, geography, and internal condition of England are amusing, too, in their way. He believes religiously in Brut, has the strangest possible legend about Eleanor of Guyenne and the cause of the war between France and England, mixes up the battles of Cressy and Poitiers together, and confounds Charles VI. with Charles V. But no one will go to the pages of Gutierre de Gamez to learn English history. Neither do we place much store on his long preface about chivalry, in the course of which he gives strange versions of the deeds of Solomon, Alexander, Nebuchadnezzar, and Julius Cæsar, as being the four great princes of ancient times whose lives are worthy of study and imitation. The good *alferes*, who wrote this chronicle when he was about seventy, is fond of sermonizing on every occasion, and he cannot speak of the marriage of his captain without giving us a little treatise on the various degrees of love, and giving short histories of Calctrix, queen of the Amazons, Penthesilea, &c., all of which we owe to the fact that Gutierre de Gamez had read the *Poëma de Alexandro* and the *Historia Civitatis Troyæ* of Guido della Collonna, translated into the Castilian of his time.

Don Pedro Niño does not appear to have had his origin from any very remarkable family; it is true that because he had *fleurs-de-lys* in his coat-of-arms he wished to be thought to be descended from a younger branch of the French royal family: but this we imagine to have been a weakness on the part of Pedro Niño. His grandfather was a good soldier, but he fought under Peter the Cruel and on the same side with our Black Prince: consequently when Don Henrique II. prevailed with Du Guesclin and put his brother to death and seized the crown, the family of the Niños fell into disgrace for a time; and in spite of the disdainful speech which Gamez, on the authority of Pedro Niño, attributes to his father when the Queen of Castile sent for Doña Ines Laso, his mother, and offered her the infant prince, afterwards Don Henrique III., to nurse, we imagine the family never had any occasion to repent their acceptance of the charge of rearing the heir to the crown; for we find they almost immediately received as reward the gift from the king of the fiefs of Cigales, Berzosa, and Fuente-Burueva. And the fact that their son was thus made the foster-brother of Don Henrique III. of Castile was the main cause of all the prosperity to which he attained.

The King of Castile, Don Juan II., moreover, evidently taking charge of the boy's welfare, gave Pedro Niño—or Pero Niño, as he was familiarly called—a governor at an early age, to teach him all the good manners of the time. The *alferes* gives us one of the preceptor's discourses to his pupil, which we may abbreviate. We may omit the portions where he discusses on his duty of raising his family up to its *former great estate*; likewise wholly that which shows the greatness and goodness of the Deity, by the facts that the sun shines by day and the moon by night, and that the sea is full of whales, and the air of little birds; also the portion which inculcates obedience to Holy Church, and the duty of imitating the

martyr spirit of Saint Iago. From these generalities he descends to particular admonitions, which show, at least, that the moral ideal of those days was good enough, whatever may have been their practice. "Incline your ear to the poor; answer him gently; give him alms. Deliver the oppressed. Beware of deceivers, and those who promise to make two doubloons out of one, and to turn silver into gold. Seek the society of the good, and you will become like them. Keep from the bad, or you cannot escape contamination. Be temperate in food, drink, and sleep; the soul should be to the body as the musician to the instrument, and if your instrument is made false, the musician will never draw out the right notes; but when the instrument is well accorded the breath of the player fills it with harmony. Do not deliver your noble person to the society of dishonourable women, for they demand love and have none to give in return. Their intercourse is a shortening of life, corruption of virtue, and transgression of the law of God. My son, keep clear of avarice if you would be your own master; if not you will be a slave; your care will be measured by the quantity of your riches. Esteem not a man for what fortune gives him. The honour of owning castles, herds, flocks, horses, fine clothes, and metal, things of earthly origin, cannot equal that of wisdom and virtue, things of the soul. Regard your vassals not for the good you may get of them, but as your friends. A noble man hath a generous tongue. Be gentle to all the world. There is nothing more noble than the heart of man, and never, with good grace, will it endure oppression. More men are gained by love than by fear. No courteous man will say behind the back what he will not say before the face. Four great faults are there—pride, obstinacy, haste, and idleness. The fruit of pride is hatred; of obstinacy, contention; of haste, repentance; of idleness, ruin.

"My son, serve the king, but keep at a distance from him, for he is a lion whose play is destruction and whose paw gives death in sport. Fear not death. He alone should fear death who has done little good and much evil."

Pero Niño, according to Gamez, turned out a *caballero* endowed with moral qualities not unworthy of his preceptor, who set indeed small store by learning of any kind, telling Pero, at the age of ten, that he knew now nearly enough for all practical purposes. But God, says the *alferes*, had been liberal to Pedro of inward gifts. He grew up very courteous and gracious of speech, resolute with the strong, gentle with the weak, and amiable to all; cautious in question and reply, just in judgment, and always forgiving. He was the defence of the poor, his purse was always open, and no solicitor went away from him with an empty hand. He was constant and sincere, and no word-breaker. He was never idle. Temperance was the rule of his life; he was chaste in his youth; never ate or drank except at the hours of repast, knowing the truth of the proverb that idleness, high living, and honour never dwell in the same house. As for his person, he was handsome, strongly built, of middle stature, and well made; his shoulders were broad, his chest developed,

his waist, slender, his arms were long, and his legs well shaped. His voice was clear and agreeable, his conversation lively, and his expressions elegant. He was always dressed well; his costume was carefully arranged, and he carried it well. A poor dress looked better on him than a rich one on many others. He caught up the new fashions quicker than the tailor, and others imitated his way of dressing. As for armour and weapons, he was a true connoisseur; he could teach armourers the best way of cutting and fashioning coats of mail, and how to make them lighter without being less strong. Of sword and dagger he was equally a good judge. No one understood so well how a saddle should be made, and he invented many improvements in the way of caparisoning horses. No Castilian had so many horses. He trained them in his own way, for war, for jousting, and for parade. He was a splendid swordsman. He excelled in athletic exercises; he surpassed all in manœuvres with the lance; he was a good shot with the crossbow, and by assiduous practice, cultivated all the gifts of his person for the profession of a knight and a noble.

Pero Niño, the foster-brother of the king, Don Henrique, became his close companion, and accompanied him in all his expeditions. Don Henrique began to govern on his own authority in his fourteenth year, for his father, Don Juan, died early in life and left him a minor. In those days of feudal anarchy a royal minority was always a bad time for a kingdom. The superior feudal lords almost invariably, as a matter of course, at such times arranged leagues and attempted all manner of aggressions. Don Alfonso, the uncle of the king, after having rebelled against the royal authority, while it was in the hands of the regent, as soon as Don Henrique assumed the government himself, set up the standard of revolt at Gijon. Pero Niño, being then fifteen, accompanied his sovereign on an expedition against Gijon, and the king supplied him with arms and armour out of his own armoury. After having brought affairs at Gijon to a successful issue, Don Henrique went to Seville to settle some disturbances caused by a riot and outbreak against the Jews, and while there Pero Niño distinguished himself twice in the same day at a hunting-party on the banks of the Guadalquivir. He first succeeded in killing a wild-boar, which, being hard pressed, had taken to the river: Pero Niño swam after it, speared it, and brought it to land. And in the evening, as the king was returning in his galley down the stream at a great pace, Pero's quick eye caught sight of a hawser stretching across the river before them, which would have infallibly upset the whole party, had not the young fellow leapt to the prow and sheared it asunder with one blow of his sword. After making a brilliant figure at various tournaments, and in the games with the jered—*the juego de cañas*, which the Spaniards had learnt from the Arabs; after having his horse killed under him at his first battle, fought in company with the king, Pero Niño served in a campaign under the banner of the *condetable* of Castile, Don Ray Lopez Dávalos, against the King of Portugal; and in this expedition, before Pontevedra, gave signs of great prowess, fighting, on one occasion, for two hours with two

painful wounds in the head and neck, and killing a famous swordsman, Gomez Domoa, on whom he administered such a *coup de grace* with his sword, that he cut through his shield and slit his skull down to the eyes.

After this brilliant commencement of Pero's long career of arms, the king selected him at twenty-five to command an expedition against the Barbary corsairs. Don Henrique provided his foster-brother with two excellent galleys, manned with robust rowers, the best crossbowmen which could be found. He gave them beforehand, according to the custom of Castile, strangely at variance with the later ways of penniless Spain, all their pay for the whole term of the service for which they were engaged, and he provided Pero Niño with all manner of arms, with good and strong crossbows, and sufficient coin in gold and silver for his necessities in foreign countries. Pero Niño's cousin, Fernando Niño, and the *alferez*, accompanied him, and thirty young *caballeros* of his own age. These galleys and one sailing-vessel started from Seville. Before starting Pero Niño passed his squadron in review before the townspeople of Seville, who were delighted at the brave figure they made. One of the chief inhabitants of Seville, indeed, was so pleased that he invited Pero Niño and all his squadron to lay-to at Coria, about eighteen miles below Seville, where he had a country-house, and there he gave Pero Niño and the *caballeros*, his companions, a splendid banquet, in which the roasted peacock of chivalry, with the tail admirably displayed, was not forgotten, and during which their entertainer made them a set speech after the fashion of the times, to encourage them to deeds of arms. As they passed, too, along the Moorish coast, at Gibraltar, and Algeziras, and Malaga, the Moorish inhabitants of these cities came out to admire their galleys, and as soon as they were assured of their peaceful intentions, offered them all kinds of festivities, and gave presents to the captain. They made dances for him to the sound of Moorish flutes and trumpets, the *xabibas*, the *añafilas*, and other instruments, and sent his sailors sheep and oxen, the *alcouzouz*, and other delicacies. Nevertheless the galleys were several times, as they coasted along, enveloped in a thick fog, all owing to the wicked contrivances of Moorish sorcerers; but by the expedient of each crew making the sign of the cross all at once, and saying certain prayers, these fogs were always dispersed. They were assailed, too, by a tempest; yet the galleys coasted on to Carthage, and from thence crossed over to the Barbary coast, and cruised about there, looking for corsairs. They met with no corsairs on their first visit to the Barbary coast, but they had a fight with the Moors on shore, having been obliged to put into a creek to get water. They managed to provide themselves with water, and to effect a successful retreat to their ships, at cost of much hard fighting; and the skill and courage of Pero Niño on this occasion inspired his crew with complete confidence in their leader.

On his return to Carthage Pero Niño got news of a corsair who had done great damage to the merchant subjects of the king, his master. This was a Castilian, one Juan de Castillo, who, having committed man-

slaughter in Spain, had escaped and taken to piracy in company with a Moorish galley. Pero Niño followed these two galleys up from port to port till he came to Marseilles. At Marseilles he was about to attack them near the harbour, when a galley came out bearing the Papal ensign, the cross keys of St. Peter, and having a knight of St. John on board. The knight of St. John asked them who they were, and when he was told, said that the Pope (or rather Antipope Benedict XIII., then in refuge at Marseilles) begged him to observe the peace of his city, in return for which he should have his benediction and a hospitable reception. Pero Niño obeyed the Pope's injunctions, and desisted from his attack. He was invited by the Pope to his château, and passed a few days in Marseilles, accepting the hospitality of the Pope, his cardinals and followers, with the determination, however, of still following up the corsairs, who had run away during this time to his great displeasure. After leaving Marseilles he went to Toulon, and there heard that the corsairs had gone off in the direction of Sardinia and Corsica. Pero Niño was not destined to fall in with these corsairs again, but hearing in the course of his cruising that the Sultan of Tunis was fitting up some galleys, he determined to go to Tunis and seize them. It does not appear that the King of Castile was actually at war at this time with the Sultan of Tunis, but between Moors and Christians war public or private was considered a commendable affair at any time. Pero Niño then, crossing over from Sardinia, crept along the coast of Barbary with a view of surprising the Tunisian galleys. He anchored his ships for a while at a desert island, now called Zimbrot, about five leagues from Tunis, to rest his men a while after the fatigues of the sea-voyage, for they had been assailed by a tremendous storm in their passage over. During the ten days they anchored there the captain allowed no fire to be lighted, to avoid discovery. On a moonlight night Pero Niño crept out with his galleys from his hiding-place and ran straight to Tunis. The galleys moved gently, with muffled oars, no words were spoken, and the dip of the oar-blades was scarcely distinguishable; in this quiet fashion they came right upon a Moorish galley at anchor at about a league from Tunis. The Moorish crew were taken quite unawares, nevertheless they defended themselves till they were all killed or taken prisoners. The prisoners gave intelligence that their sultan was fitting up a large galley in the port—his own state galley in fact—and Pero Niño determined to carry off this vessel. But a Genoese carrack, lying at anchor in the harbour, had heard the noise of the fighting going on three miles off, and blew the trumpet to make ready for action, themselves on the look-out for corsairs. This warned the crew of the royal galley, which prepared for action also, and retreated up a canal, closely followed by Pero Niño and his two galleys. The canal was so narrow that Pero Niño could only attack the enemy from behind. He stood on the prow of his own vessel and ordered the rowers to drive hard into the stern of the boat before him, and when the ships approached near enough he leapt, armed as he was, with cuirass and brassards, with a steel cap and a shield and sword, on to

the enemy's poop. The collision of the two ships caused a retreat of the following vessel, just as Pero had leapt: he was for some time left alone on board the enemy's ship, but defended himself against the whole crew, though wounded in several places, and very severely in one leg. His own vessel approached at last, and the Moorish galley was taken. The Moors had, however, run it aground, and while Pero Niño was endeavouring to get it afloat day broke, and the whole male population of Tunis came down to attack the audacious Christian galleys. There was a desperate fight: the Moors swarmed round the ships in thousands, on foot and on horseback, in the water, and tried to board the galleys, but the Castilians fought their way out, committing such havoc that the sea was crimson with blood. They were unable, however, to carry off their prizes, which they rifled and set on fire.

After this Pero Niño returned to Carthage, sent the Moorish prisoners he had taken to the king, divided his booty among his sailors, freshened up his weather-beaten galleys, and prepared for another cruise on the coast of Barbary. During this second expedition Pero Niño suffered so much from the wound in his leg which he received at Tunis, that he had often to resign the leadership of his men in the descents which he made on the Moorish coast from time to time. Evidently, too, this cruising about for corsairs, and the habit he had got of looking upon all Moorish property as legitimate booty, had demoralized Pero's mind, for we now read that the first thing this expedition did on getting over to the coast of Barbary was to look out for some village or small city to sack, and no *smala* of any rich Moghrebin chieftain, none of the poorest Arab *douars*, were safe from these Castilian rovers, if they were at a convenient distance from the shore. The Castilian freebooters made themselves a kind of hawk's nest at the desert isle of Alhabiba, and from thence they swept along the Moorish coast, pouncing down on whatever game on shore attracted their notice. The richest capture in this way was the *smala* of Mohammed Muley Hadji, a rich Moghrebin chief, who had left his women and flocks and herds behind him near a small seaport called Arzeo-el-Belli, while he had himself gone off to attack an Arab *douar* not far away, with his tribe, mounted on 1,500 camels. A Moor, whom they had caught up along the coast, gave them news of the rich undefended *smala* of Mohammed Muley Hadji. So one morning, at early dawn, the galleys of Pero Niño dropped anchor off the sandy shore of Arzeo-el-Belli, and Pedro landed his soldiers, armed with lance and sword, and a goodly band of crossbowmen, who surrounded the oxen and sheep, which they had seen from the sea, and began to drive the poor beasts to the shore, where they hamstringed them and cut their throats, so that the whole shore was covered with bleeding carcasses. While Pero Niño's men were engaged thus a body of Moors arrived upon them, and a fight ensued, in which the Castilians got the upper hand, and, in pursuit of their enemies, came right upon the black tents of the great *smala* of Mohammed Muley Hadji, containing all the women of himself and his chief men, all his Arabs' tent furniture, and the

remainder of his camels and mules and asses. A desperate struggle took place here; for Moorish horsemen arrived on all sides to defend their wives and property. The whole day was taken up with fighting, in which, however, the Spaniards managed in the end to get off to their galleys with a goodly quantity of booty, with rich Moorish carpets, *alcatifas* and *alfombras*, barrels and jars of honey and butter, salted and smoked provisions, dates, almonds, ostrich feathers, porcupine quills, and bread and corn in abundance. Nevertheless, although Pedro Niño was not discontented with that day's work, he was not satisfied on the whole with his cruise, *since he had not yet put some considerable place of the country to sack*; and after one or two more fights of this character he was obliged to return to Carthagena, where he found a king's letter, ordering him to return to Seville. The wound in Pero Niño's leg had never healed, and at Seville it became so bad that he was obliged to lay up and call in the best surgeons of the place to consult. Their first opinion was that the leg must be amputated to save Pero Niño's life, but Pero Niño bluntly declared that life was worth nothing to a *caballero* with only one leg, that he would never consent to this, though he was ready to undergo every other operation. The surgeons then determined to cauterize the wound with red-hot iron. A piece of red-hot iron of the thickness of a cross-bow-bolt was heated to a white heat, and as the doctors seemed squeamish about the operation, fearing to put Pero Niño to so much pain, he seized the iron himself, and without hesitation or sign of pain on his face, passed it up and down his wound and probed it to the bottom. This operation he performed for himself twice, after which the wound healed, and Pero Niño so rapidly recovered that he shortly after made a most brilliant appearance at a tournament given on the occasion of the birth of the king's eldest son, after which the king sent Pero Niño with three galleys to France, to assist the French against the English, for the two nations were in their normal state of war, and treaties of offensive and defensive alliance between France and Spain were of ancient date.

Pero Niño first betook himself with his three galleys to Rochelle, where he met the Seigneur de Seignelay, Messire Charles de Savoisy, who, with two galleys, was appointed by the King of France—Charles VI.—to keep company with Pedro Niño in an intended foray on the English coast. From La Rochelle the two captains went to St. Malo, and from thence, in the face of a violent storm, passed over to the coast of Cornwall. They seized some fishing boats on their way, from whose owners to get information of the state of the country. The first place they made a descent upon appears to have been St. Erth, described as a town of 800 inhabitants, chiefly merchants and fishermen, and very rich. According to Gamez's account, the French and Spaniards routed the defenders of the town in open field, then sacked the place and burnt it to ashes, and retreated, carrying away two merchant-ships they found in the harbour. From thence they went to, Dartmouth, where they saw so many men-at-arms ready to receive them on the shore that they declined to try their fortune

there; so they went back to make an attack on Plymouth, where also the inhabitants gave them so warm a reception with bombards and cannons that they failed to effect anything, and a stiff breeze coming on, and there being then no breakwater, the French and Spanish galleys had a bad time of it in Plymouth Sound, and their ships were in great danger of being driven on the rocks, but they got out to sea again and bore away to Portland. The whole south of England by this time was aware that this predatory squadron was prowling along the coast, and no sooner did their ships appear in sight than the inhabitants of the island of Portland, amounting to about 200, carried off their wives and children to caverns in the rocks and left their town to be pillaged. The French here began to burn the houses, and Gamez says the Castilians prevented them all they could because the population was poor and they had pity upon them. According to Gamez, only one Castilian set fire to the thatched roof of a cottage and that *would* not burn, but directly a Frenchman set a house on fire it was all in flames in a minute. The attack was made at high water, when Portland is an island and separate from the mainland; but the inhabitants of the mainland, having become aware of the attack on the island, collected together on the shore, prepared to pass over when the tide should fall, and a fight ensued before the French and Spaniards could get away, in which they had several wounded. After this the French and Spanish squadrons go to Pool, which the French captain had an especial desire to put to pillage, because he heard the town belonged to one Harry Paye, called Arripay in Gamez's narrative, a famous English sea-captain in those days, who was warden also of the Cinque Ports, and had frightfully worried French commerce, having made a single swoop at one time of 120 rich French merchant-ships. His flag was the terror of the Channel, and was dreaded as far as Gijon and Finisterre, which latter place he had burnt, having carried away a miraculous crucifix from the church of Santa Maria de Finisterre. They landed at Pool and had a desperate fight with the inhabitants and men-at-arms. They succeeded in burning part of the town and carrying off a great deal of booty, but before they had finished their operations, so many men-at-arms, archers, and horsemen came against them from the surrounding country, that they were obliged to retreat to their ships. The quiet borough of Pool resounded that day with the voice of Pero Niño, crying, "*Sant Iago! Sant Iago!*" and with the clangour of Spanish trumpets. Arrows were shot so thickly that Gamez says, at the end of the fight the ground was strewn with them so deeply that you could take up a handful at a time. It appears by Gamez that the brother of Harry Paye was there and was killed. Nevertheless both French and Spaniards seem to have thought it creditable to have been able to make a retreat in good order, concluding they had nothing to get but plenty of fighting by staying longer at Pool. So at Pool they bore away for Southampton, and entered Southampton Water. Winter was now coming on, and the advice of the pilots was that they should return to pass the winter in some French port.

But Pero Niño had sworn to pay a visit to London before he left the English coast, and, as he appears to have been an obstinate fellow, the pilots, no doubt to shorten the voyage, persuaded him that the way to town was up Southampton Water, for Pero Niño and Gamez, his *alferez*, were persuaded to their last days that they saw London, with their own eyes, at the top of Southampton Water. They did nothing particular in Southampton Water; they saw a town, evidently Southampton, but which, doubtless, the pilots, to satisfy Pero Niño, declared to be London, and so got him to row away for France, past the Isle of Wight, past Jersey and Guernsey and Alderney, to Harfleur. After winding up this expedition, the worthy *alferez*, Gutierrez Diaz de Gamez, sums up the rules which a Christian man must observe in this kind of predatory warfare to obtain salvation—for he says salvation is to be got even by this filibustering kind of work. Firstly, he must spare his enemy when he is down; secondly, he must respect the churches, and all those who take refuge there; thirdly, he must respect the women; fourthly, he must not burn harvests or houses—all which precepts his captain, Pero Niño, fully observed, except at Pool, on the lands of Harry Paye (forgetting, apparently, the slight affair at St. Erth, where they burnt the whole town). Next year, the French and Spanish galleys put again to sea, and had a fight with a large English squadron, which Gamez believed was under the direction of the redoubtable Harry Paye; but it appears most likely he was mistaken: at all events, even according to Gamez's account, the French and Spanish did not get any advantage in the conflict, and the *alferez* makes a long address to Wind and Fortune to reproach them for their inconstancy to his master on this occasion.

Soon after this Pero Niño got up an expedition against Jersey—had a sanguinary fight there—burnt the island, and put the chief town to ransom: after which he returned to Spain, where he obtained a splendid reception from his foster-brother the king, Don Henrique, who, with his own hand, dubbed him a knight on that occasion, and gave a great banquet in his honour, at which time also he said,—“Pedro Niño, my will is to raise you up to a far greater estate, and to give you command of some great honourable enterprise.” But alas! for human hope—Don Henrique died shortly after, in 1406, at the age of twenty-eight, and all the expectations Pero Niño founded on the goodwill of his foster-brother were annihilated. Nevertheless, Pero Niño was now become Don Pedro Niño, and looked upon generally as a rising man.

Don Henrique left a little son a year old—Don Juan II.—and this poor infant, in such rude times, had a hard life of it among the fierce crowd of *infantes*, *adelantados*, *mayordomos*, *condestables*, and feudal chiefs and barons, all wanting to have their own way. A long minority, as we have said, never then failed to be a calamitous period for the nation: hence, many advised Don Fernando, the eldest brother of the last king, to take the crown for himself; but he refused, and assumed the regency in the name of his infant nephew, and governed the kingdom in such fashion

that he gained the surname of Don Fernando the Honest. But he died in 1416, and in him Pedro Niño lost another protector in whom he had begun to place great hope of advancement.

Pero Niño's public life now belongs to the general history of Spain—for he took a leading part, on one side or the other, and not always a loyal one, in the factions and disorders which disturbed the whole reign of Don Juan II. Pero Niño was created Conde de Buelna by Don Juan II. on the eve of a battle under the walls of Granada, during a campaign which his master had undertaken against the Moors. His testament enables us to discover that he had found fighting, on the whole, a prosperous affair, for he had contrived to get together a goodly number of fiefs and castles. In the province of Burgos he possessed Villagomez, Montuenga, Fresoso, and Fuente-Burueva; in the province of Palencia, Torre de Momojon, Calavar and Quintanilla; in the province of Valladolid, Cigales and Villa Baquerin; in Estremadura, Valverde, Talavar and Arroyo di Puerro; in the two Asturias, the Valley of Buelna, Carrejo, Sante Lucia, Santivañez, and the toll of the bridge on the Saja.

Not that after all Pero Niño had become a great noble for Spain, where Don Ferrant Perez de Guzman looked with contempt on Don Juan Gonzales de Avellanoda as a small country squire, since he only possessed 2,000 vassals and only kept a hundred men-at-arms in his castle, and where the king, Don Pedro, in 1360, had to raze eighty castles, the property of one rebel subject, Don Diego Perez Sarmiento.

Pero Niño's marriages and love-affairs occupy a very considerable portion of his memoirs by his *alferes*, for one of the fine qualities which the good Gamez manages to discover in Pero Niño, was his good taste in love-matters. For "as much as he was valiant, and excelled in chivalry all the other knights of his time, so much he distinguished himself in placing his love always in high places."

He was married first, at about the age of twenty-two, to Doña Constanza de Guevara, a widow lady of great family, whom he had met with in the house of Don Ruy Lopez Davalos, the *constable* of Spain, his early patron. Doña Constanza only survived the marriage four years; but hardly a year had passed from her death, when Pero Niño, during his stay in France, had a very serious love-affair with Madame de Serifontaine, widow of the Grand Admiral of France, Renaud de Trie. For Gamez tells us that Pero Niño lived on terms of great familiarity with the nobles and gentlemen of France, and soon was at home in their manners and customs and polite ways,—since a small lesson suffices for some, while to others great teaching is no profit. With Pero Niño all courtesy was natural, and politeness was as easy to him as drawing breath.

As for the French, it is well to know what sort of character the *alferes*, who was always in company with his master, gave them at this period. The French, he says, "are a noble nation; they are wise, intelligent, and refined in all things which belong to good education, courtesy, and nobility; they are very elegant in their clothes, and magnificent in their

equipages. They are very nice in their attire; they are liberal and great givers of presents; they like to give pleasure to all the world; they treat strangers with great honour; they can bestow praise, especially on fine actions; they are not malicious; they are not contentious, except in matters of honour; they are very courteous and graceful in their speech; both men and women are very gay, and fond of amusement; they are very amorous, and make no secret of it." And here the worthy Gamez says, they attribute their amorous tendencies to the fact that their country is subject to the influence of the star Venus; but he seriously and at length refutes the supposition on religious grounds.

While, then, Pero Niño was wintering in France, waiting for the season to arrive to make another descent on the English coast, he ascended with his galleys to Rouen. Renaud de Trie, *Seigneur* of Serifontaine and Admiral of France, was captain of the Château of Rouen. But the admiral was old now, and broken down with long and hard service by sea and land. The worn-out veteran had retired to his castle of Serifontaine in the Vexin, near Gisors, and lived there with his wife. Hearing, however, that the Spanish captain who had just done good service against the English was come up to pass the winter at Rouen, he sent to him and invited him to come and pass some time at Serifontaine, and repose himself from the hardships of seafaring and sacking little towns.

The account of château-life in France from the pages of the *alferex*, carries us quite back to the days of the *seigneurs* and *châtelaines* of the fourteenth century. The château of the admiral consisted of a group of buildings surrounded by a fortification and moat. The *châtelaine* lived in a different building from her lord, and there was even a drawbridge between the two constructions. There was a large chapel, in which mass was said every day. A river ran in front of the château, on the banks of which were orchards and gardens. There was a large fish-pond behind the château, surrounded by a wall, and kept locked up with a key, from which fish could be daily taken sufficient for three hundred persons. The admiral had his servitors and pages, and his lady, who was one of the most beautiful and high-born women of France, and whose maiden name was Jeanne de Bellengues, had likewise her ten ladies of high birth, richly dressed and well lodged, and with no other duties but that of making a good appearance and pleasant society for the lady of the castle, since there were, besides them, abundance of waiting-maids. There were minstrels and players on the horn. There was a pack of forty or fifty hounds, with a body of huntsmen, whippers-in, and kennel-keepers. Of the number of horses an idea may be formed by the fact that there were twenty different private mounts for the lord of the castle, among which were chargers, palfreys, hunters, and hackneys. There were, besides, falcons and heronries. There were extensive forests close to the château, full of stags and deer and wild boars; the house was provided with everything just as though it had been in the centre of Paris; and its furniture was magnificent.

The châtelaine was a person of great intelligence, and took charge of the management of her lord's estates, as well as of the household, so that it was impossible to see things better ordered.

In the summer-time, immediately after she was dressed, the châtelaine went out with all her ladies to a bower in the garden; each one took her *liere d'heures* and her rosary, and they remained there apart, and never spoke, till they had finished their prayers. Then they gathered violets and other flowers, and returned to the château and heard mass. Then they breakfasted on plates of silver, on roast-fowls, or larks, or other birds, and took a little wine. Then madame went with all her ladies on palfreys finely caparisoned for a promenade, having invited the knights and gentlemen to ride with them. And they chanted, on the way, *lais, deslais, virelais, rondeaux*, ballads, and *complaintes*. "Such a life!" says the *alferez*, "that if it could but last, one would wish for no other Paradise."

Pero Niño was received at once as a favoured guest by the admiral and his lady. He dined with them at a table on the high *dais*, while the *maitre-d'hôtel* presided at the table where the *alferez* sat, and where a knight or squire was seated by the side of each lady. As for the conversation it ran all on feats of arms and love-matters, while a band of musicians played all the time of the dinner. After dinner the tables were removed, and the minstrels came, and Pero Niño danced with the mistress of the house, and every knight with his lady. When the dance was over every dancer kissed his partner. Then spiced sweetmeats were brought, wine was served, and each one went away to take a *siesta*. After the *siesta* the whole party took again to horseback. Pages arrived with falcons. Madame took her falcon on her fist and placed herself ready for the pages to start the heron, and then she let fly her falcon so gracefully that nothing could be better. There is a tone of quite pathetic regret in the sentences where Gamez speaks of these scenes—of dogs scouring, of drums and trumpets sounding, of hawks wheeling back to their lures, and knights and ladies along the river taking such pleasures as, he says, are beyond description.

After they had ridden through the valley madame got off her palfrey and took her seat on the grass, and cold fowls, and partridges, and fruits, and wine were produced from panniers, and all ate and drank, and returned with songs and chants to the château. In the evening there was supper—late in the winter time, early if it was summer—for then madame took a walk in the woods, and those who would played at bowls. When night came the guests were conducted to the great hall with torches, and supper was had; and the minstrels came again, and they danced deep into the night, then fruits and wine were served, and the company departed to sleep.

Such was the life Pero Niño lived at the château of Serifontaine for a time. He speedily acquired the good graces of the lady of the house; and since during the stay of Pero Niño in France her husband, the admiral, after having been for some time in a bedridden state, died, Jeanne de

Bellengues sent for Pero Niño to console her, and he consoled her so well that there was talk of marriage between them, and they appear indeed to have been affianced ; but it seemed not decent to Jeanne de Bellengues to marry so soon after her first husband's death, and it was agreed to defer the matter ; indeed both parties were married very shortly after, but not to each other, for Jeanne de Bellengues married Jean Malet Sire de Gravelle, grand falconer, bread-bearer, and master of the crossbowmen of the King of France. Pero Niño, however, if we may judge from a discreet line of his *alferez*, seems not to have come up to the latter's idea of constancy, for it appears Madame de Serifontaine was waiting for Pero Niño in good faith in France, when he sent her word from Spain (as the *alferez* says, it was quite right that he should) that he released her from her engagement ; for Pero Niño was then doing his best to win the hand of Doña Beatriz de Portugal. Doña Beatriz was of royal blood, being the daughter of an Infant of Portugal, and was a better match for Pero Niño than was Madame de Serifontaine. Her father, Don Juan, had incurred the deadly enmity of his sister-in-law, the Queen of Portugal, who had been plain Doña Leonor Tellez. After enacting a small domestic tragedy in Portugal (in fact he had put to death his wife, who was the sister of Leonor Tellez, because Leonor Tellez had, with views of her own, caused Don Juan to believe his wife was unfaithful), he was obliged to seek refuge in Castile in the life-time of Don Henrique. Don Henrique had married him in his life-time to his half-sister, the Infante Doña Custança, and of this marriage came two daughters, Doña Maria and Doña Beatriz : Doña Beatriz thus was a royal heiress both in Spain and in Portugal. She was first affianced to a son of the Regent, but the King of Aragon having demanded her hand of Don Fernando, the Regent for political reasons resigned for his son the alliance with Doña Beatriz. But the King of Aragon died, and Doña Beatriz, not a little disgusted at being tossed about thus from one to another, determined to look out for a husband for herself. The court was at Valladolid, and great *fêtes*, and joustings and *juegos de cañas* were being celebrated there, for the Queen of Navarre had come to Spain to visit her uncle, Don Fernando the Regent, with a suite of grand seigneurs and noble knights, and at all the joustings and jereed matches, Pero Niño, (who was now thirty-one, and a known performer in this line,) with five knights wearing the arms of his house, cut a splendid figure, and attracted the attention of Doña Beatriz, who herself was now about twenty-four years of age.

The first occasion on which she remarked Pero Niño was at a tournament held in the street in which her house was situate at Valladolid. Pero Niño having unhorsed one of the greatest grandees of Spain, a dispute arose between herself and her ladies as to the manner in which it was done ; and as she took Pero Niño's side very enthusiastically her words were carried to him : so Pero Niño determined to win, if possible, the hand of the royal heiress, whose spirit, as subsequent events proved, equalled her fortune. His first step was to get the ladies about her to say a good word for him on every occasion, and to talk of the deeds of prowess

he had done; his next, to find an ambassadress, to send her a message, and ask leave to serve her as her knight, since he was prepared to love her to the death as having more generosity than all the queens of Spain. At this message Doña Beatriz changed colour and replied nothing. But the ladies around her, gained over by Pero Niño, still continued to chant his praises, till Doña Beatriz, professing to be sceptical of their truth, ordered them to speak no more of that knight, of whom she had heard an opposite account. Perhaps this was a device on the part of Doña Beatriz to bring Pero Niño forward; for very soon after, as she was going down the street for her daily ride, she found Pero Niño waiting there, and, as fortune would have it, the street was so encumbered that she could do no other-wise than let Pero Niño take the rein of her palfrey to guide her, upon which Pero Niño spoke to her for the first time, and repeated the declaration he had made by message: upon which Doña Beatriz replied that "women should always hold men's protestations in suspicion," but that she would take the advice of those bound to guide her and she would give him a reply. No reply, however, came till Pero Niño managed to enlist in his service the favour of Doña Beatriz's illegitimate half-brother—Don Fernando—himself a loyal knight and a comrade of Pero Niño, who undertook to use all his influence with his sister—being of opinion that it was for her honour, after the failure of royal and other marriage schemes, and since her hand was the subject of daily intrigue, that she should be speedily married; and that she could find no more loyal knight for a husband than Pero Niño, however much higher she might look and longer she might wait. It is far foreseen on both sides that such a marriage would be displeasing to the Infant Don Fernando the Regent, and that he would prevent it by all the means in his power.

The end, however, of the intercession of Beatriz's half-brother was that she sent a message to Pero Niño to the effect that, although she knew the difficulties and dangers which might ensue from an engagement with him, yet, if he was willing to pledge himself to carry the matter through to the last extremity, she, on her side, was decided to follow the advice of her brother and others who had counselled her, in consideration of the respect they had for Pero Niño's knighthood, and that she thought there was no other knight but he in the kingdom capable of undertaking so difficult an enterprise. A spirited and courageous young lady, we see, this Doña Beatriz de Portugal. For the peril was no slight one on either side, since it was nothing less than high treason, with all its consequences, for Pero Niño to attempt to ally himself with a royal lady unknown to the Regent, and Doña Beatriz herself might expect nothing short of imprisonment. In consequence of this message, a secret betrothal was solemnized by a priest in the presence of the brother of Doña Beatriz and other noble persons; after which Pero Niño undertook to break the matter to the Regent. He approached him by degrees, speaking on the subject of marriage in general in person, and, finally, through the royal confessor, informed him that his views were directed to Doña Beatriz. The Regent

sent word that he was to mention that topic no more, since Doña Beatriz's marriage was his affair. However, those about the Regent who were curious of Pero Niño gave him to understand that he was being deceived, and he sent for Pero Niño to have an explanation.

Pedro Niño did not avow the betrothal, but spoke so boldly in support of his claims to be admitted as a suitor of the lady, that the courtiers thought the Regent would immediately order him to be arrested. Many a grandee had had his head taken off for a less matter; but Don Fernando the Honest was a mild and generous prince, and he let Pero Niño depart freely from his presence. The audacious suitor prudently left the court at once to take refuge with the queen-mother, whom he had gained over to his side. Doña Beatriz was now sent for by the Regent and his lady, the Infante, and asked to state what had really taken place between her and Pero Niño. Doña Beatriz, knowing that Pero Niño had gone away and placed himself in safety, now boldly avowed the betrothal, and argued at length in justification of her choice. She was told she had done a villainous action. She replied she was willing to undergo any punishment it would entail on her, and was retained as a prisoner at large in the suite of the queen. Menaces and cajoleries were tried by turns upon her to make her renounce her engagement with Pero Niño, but she withstood them all, and said she would never take any other husband, and would die for him if need were. She was then, to terrify her into submission, sent to the fortress of Urcelina, in the province of Valladolid, as a state prisoner, with a suite of ladies, with orders that she should be kept in strict seclusion—not a man was to be allowed to speak with her. Nevertheless, Pero Niño, at the suggestion of the queen-mother, whose retreat at Magaz was invaded by the emissaries of the Regent demanding the surrender of her refugee, had escaped to Bayonne—and from thence he made three or four clandestine visits to his betrothed; and contrived to see her during the time she was immured at Urcelina. He might, the *alferes* says, have carried her off if he pleased, but he thought such a proceeding not suited to his honour, and was determined to get the public consent of the Regent. The intercession of the queen-mother, and the want which the Regent felt in his approaching campaign with the Moors for a strong man of war like Don Pedro Niño, worked together in obtaining the pardon of the offender and the royal recognition of his marriage. Pedro Niño returned back into Spain, Doña Beatriz was liberated, and their marriage was celebrated with great pomp at Ogieloa. This, then, was a love-match as romantic as any in the list of hymeneal transactions, and it appears to have been a very happy one. It lasted thirty-six years, when, says Gamex, "the noble Condeza Beatriz de Portugal died at the age of sixty, and the day she died, there did not remain in all Spain another noble lady, or *hidalg*a, so good or so beautiful as she. Her confidant and good friend remained sad and afflicted, and will be so all his life, which has now reached its seventieth year."

But alas for human constancy and the provisions of the good *alferes*!

the noble Conde de Buelna consoled himself, and married a third time, with one Juana de Zuñiga. The only cause one can find for this unfaithfulness of the Conde de Buelna to the memory of his high-spirited and devoted Doña Beatriz is, that the marriage seems to have formed part of a family arrangement at the time one of his daughters was married to a Zuñiga, to divide the government of Valladolid peaceably between two families who were always in contention; but at all events, Pedro Niño was buried by the side of Doña Beatriz.

Pedro Niño, Conde de Buelna, lived long enough to learn the truth of the proverb, "Call no man happy till his last day," for his last will and testament, drawn up a few days before his death, shows a very different state of affairs to one of which record remains, and which was drawn up twenty years earlier. His Doña Beatriz was then by his side, he was in the plenitude of health, strength, and power, and was surrounded by a magnificent family of children, two sons and four daughters, for some of whom he had contracted alliances with the most splendid families of Spain.

By his first will he desired to be buried in full armour, with the purple cap of nobility on his head, and his sword on his breast, and the inscription *siempre vencedor, jamas vencido* on his tomb; but at the date of his last will the place of his long-lived countess was occupied by a strange wife, his two sons had long been dead—one of them, called Don Juan Niño de Portugal, had shown signs of greater promise even than his father in his youth, and Gamez speaks with mournful admiration of sundry deeds of prowess of his, enacted before he was twenty-four, the age at which he died. His favourite daughter, too, was dead, and another had retired into a monastery, and was now an abbess. His two remaining daughters, however, married well. They inherited together the valley of Buelna, and divided his large possessions between them; and they carried these and the name of Niño into the great families of the Herreras and Zuñigas, from whom the name of Niño has again passed into some of the noblest houses of Spain.

Quarrels with neighbours and quarrels with collateral relations embittered still more these last mournful days of Pedro Niño; and the great sign of the changed spirit of the man is, that he no longer desires to be buried in full armour, with his earl's coronet on his head, and his sword on his breast. No, he will be laid by the side of his countess, in the brown robe of a Capuchin friar. And various other indications can be gathered from Pedro Niño's last will, of a high spirit brought down to humility, and of death regarded as a deliverance.

As for his faithful *alferes*, he would appear to have died soon after the composition of his narrative, for there is no mention of him in the second will. Possibly at the date of the last the honest-hearted follower had no longer need of the very meagre pension of 8,000 maravedis provided for him by the first testament.



A MESSINO

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The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER LXVI.

SEDLEY'S NOTES.



ULIA found herself unable to come down to dinner, and Mr. Sedley had to confess that he had overtaxed her strength and imposed too far upon her zeal. "To tell truth," added he, "I forgot she was not a colleague. So shrewd and purpose-like were all her remarks, such aptitude she displayed in rejecting what was valueless, and such acuteness in retaining all that was really important, it went clean out of my head that I was not dealing with a brother of the craft, instead of a very charming and beautiful young lady."

"And you really have fallen upon papers of importance?" asked Nelly, eagerly; for Julia had already, in answer to the same question, said,

"Mr. Sedley has pledged me to silence."

"Of the last importance, Miss Bramleigh." He paused for an instant, and then added, "I am well aware that I see nothing but friends, almost members of one family, around this table, but the habits of my calling impose reserve, and, besides, I am unwilling to make revelations until, by certain inquiries, I can affirm that they may be relied on."

"Oh, Mr. Sedley, if you have a gleam, even a gleam of hope, do give it us. Don't you think our long-suffering and patience have made us worthy of it?"

"Stop, Nelly," cried Augustus, "I will have no appeals of this kind. Mr. Sedley knows our anxieties, and if he does not yield to them he has his own good reasons."

"I don't see that," broke in Jack. "We are not asking to hear our neighbour's secrets, and I take it we are of an age to be entrusted with our own."

"You speak sharply, sir," said Sedley, "but you speak well. I would only observe that the most careful and cautious people have been known to write letters, very confidential letters, which somehow got bruited about, so that clues are discovered and inferences traced which not unfrequently have given the most serious difficulties to those engaged in inquiry."

"Have no fears on that score, Mr. Sedley," said Jack; "there are not four people in Europe at this moment with fewer correspondents. I believe I might say that the roof of this house covers our whole world."

"Jack is right there," added Augustus. "If we don't write to *The Times* or the *Post*, I don't see to whom we are to tell our news."

"George hasn't even a pulpit here to expound us from," cried Jack, laughingly.

"You have an undoubted right to know what is strictly your own concern. The only question is, shall I be best consulting your interests by telling it?"

"Out with it, by all means," said Jack. "The servants have left the room now, and here we are in close committee."

Sedley looked towards Augustus, who replied by a gesture of assent; and the lawyer, taking his spectacles from his pocket, shall simply read you the entry of my note-book. Much of it will surprise and much more gratify you; but let me entreat that if you have any doubts to resolve or questions to put you will reserve them till I have finished. I will only say that for everything I shall state as fact there appears to me to be abundant proofs, and where I mention what is simply conjecture I will say so. You remember my condition, then? I am not to be interrupted."

"Agreed," cried Jack, as though replying for the most probable defaulter. "I'll not utter a word, and the others are all discretion."

"The case is this," said Sedley. "Montagu Bramleigh, of Conington Manor, married Enrichetta, daughter of Giacomo Lami, the painter. The marriage was celebrated at the village church of Portabandon, and duly registered. They separated soon after—she retiring to Holland with her father, who had compromised himself in the Irish rebellion of '98. A son was born to this marriage, christened and registered in the Protestant church at Louvain as Godfrey Lami Bramleigh. To his christening Bramleigh was expected to come, but under various pretexts

he excused himself, and sent a costly present for the occasion ; his letters, however, breathed nothing but affection, and fully recognized the boy as his son and his heir. Captain Bramleigh is, I know, impatient at the length of these details, but I can't help it. Indignant at the treatment of his daughter, Lami sent back the gift with a letter of insulting meaning. Several letters were interchanged of anger and recrimination ; and Enrichetta, whose health had long been failing, sunk under the suffering of her desertion and died. Lami left Holland, and repaired to Germany, carrying the child with him. He was also accompanied by a younger daughter, Carlotta, who, at the time I refer to, might have been sixteen or seventeen years of age. Lami held no intercourse with Bramleigh from this date, nor, so far as we know, did Bramleigh take measures to learn about the child—how he grew up, or where he was. Amongst the intimates of Lami's family was a man whose name is not unfamiliar to newspaper readers of some thirty or forty years back—a man who had figured in various conspiracies, and contrived to escape scatheless, where his associates had paid the last penalty of their crimes. This man became the suitor of Carlotta, and won her affections, although Giacomo neither liked nor trusted Niccolo Baldassare——

"Stop there," cried Jack, rising, and leaning eagerly across the table ; "say that name again."

"Niccolo Baldassare."

"My old companion—my comrade at the galleys," exclaimed Jack ; "we were locked to each other, wrist and ankle, for eight months."

"He lives then ?"

"I should think he does ; the old beggar is as stout and hale as any one here. I can't guess his age, but I'll answer for his vigour."

"This will be all important hereafter," said Sedley, making a note. "Now to my narrative. From Lami, Baldassare learned the story of Enrichetta's unhappy marriage and death, and heard how the child, then a playful little boy of three years or so, was the rightful heir of a vast fortune,—a claim the grandfather firmly resolved to prosecute at some future day. The hope was, however, not destined to sustain him, for the boy caught a fever and died. His burial-place is mentioned, and his age, four years."

"So that," cried Augustus, "the claim became extinct with him ?"

"Of course ; for though Montagu Bramleigh remarried, it was not till six years after his first wife's death."

"And our rights are unassailable ?" cried Nelly, wildly.

"Your estates are safe ; at least, they will be safe."

"And who is Fracontal de Bramleigh ?" asked Jack.

"I will tell you. Baldassare succeeded in winning Carlotta's heart, and persuaded her to elope with him. She did so, carrying with her all the presents Bramleigh had formerly given to her sister—some rings of great price, and an old watch with the Bramleigh arms in brilliant, among the number. But these were not all : she also took the letters and

documents that established her marriage, and a copy of the registration. I must hasten on, for I see impatience on every side. He broke the heart of this poor girl, who died, and was buried with her little boy in the same grave, leaving old Lami desolate and childless. By another marriage, and by a wife still living, Marie Pracontal, Baldassare had a son; and he bethought him, armed as he was with papers and documents, to prefer the claim to the Bramleigh estates for this youth; and had even the audacity to ask Lami's assistance to the fraud, and to threaten him with his vengeance if he betrayed him.

"So perfectly propped was the pretension by circumstances of actual events—Niccolo knew everything—that Bramleigh not only sent several sums of money to stifle the demand, but actually despatched a confidential person abroad to see the claimant, and make some compromise with him; for it is abundantly evident that Montagu Bramleigh only dreaded the scandal and the *éclat* such a story would create, and had no fears for the title to his estates, he all along believing that there were circumstances in the marriage with Enrichetta which would show it to be illegal, and the issue consequently illegitimate."

"I must say, I think our respected grandfather," said Augustus, gravely, "does not figure handsomely in this story."

"With the single exception of old Lami," cried Jack, "they were a set of rascals—every man of them."

"And is this the way you speak of your dear friend Niccolo Baldassare?" asked Nelly.

"He was a capital fellow at the galleys; but I suspect he'd prove a very shady acquaintance in more correct company."

"And, Mr. Sedley, do you really say that all this can be proven?" cried Nelly. "Do you believe it all yourself?"

"Every word of it. I shall test most of it within a few days. I have already telegraphed to London for one of the clever investigators of registries and records. I have ample means of tracing most of the events I need. These papers of old Lami's are full of small details; they form a closer biography than most men leave behind them."

"There was, however, a marriage of my grandfather with Enrichetta Lami?" asked Augustus.

"We give them that," cried the lawyer, who fancied himself already instructing counsel. "We contest nothing,—notice, registry, witnesses, all are as legal as they could wish. The girl was Mrs. Bramleigh, and her son Montagu Bramleigh's heir; death, however, carried away both, and the claim fell with them. That these people will risk a trial now is more than I can believe; but if they should, we will be prepared for them. They shall be indicted before they leave the court, and Count Pracontal de Bramleigh be put in the dock for forgery."

"No such thing, Sedley," broke in Bramleigh, with an energy very rare with him. "I am well inclined to believe that this young man was no party to the fraud—he has been duped throughout; nor can

I forget the handsome terms he extended to us when our fortune looked darkest."

"A generosity on which late events have thrown a very ugly light," muttered Sedley.

"My brother is right. I'll be sworn he is," cried Jack. "We should be utterly unworthy of the good luck that has befallen us, if the first use we made of it was to crush another."

"If *your* doctrines were to prevail, sir, it would be a very puzzling world to live in," said Sedley, sharply.

"We'd manage to get on with fewer lawyers, anyway."

"Mr. Sedley," said Nelly, mildly, "we are all too happy and too gratified for this unlooked-for deliverance to have a thought for what is to cause suffering anywhere. Let us, I entreat you, have the full enjoyment of this great happiness."

"Then we are probably to include the notable Mr. Cutbill in this act of indemnity?" said Sedley, sneeringly.

"I should think we would, sir," replied Jack. "Without the notable Mr. Cutbill's aid we should never have chanced on those papers you have just quoted to us."

"Has he been housebreaking again?" asked Sedley, with a grin.

"I protest," interposed Bramleigh, "if the good fairy who has been so beneficent to us were only to see us sparring and wrangling in this fashion, she might well think fit to withdraw her gift."

"Oh, here's Julia," cried Nelly; "and all will go right now."

"Well," said Julia, "has any one moved the thanks of the house to Mr. Sedley? for if not, I'm quite ready to do it. I have my speech prepared."

"Move! move!" cried several together.

"I first intend to have a little dinner," said she; "but I have ordered it in the small dining-room; and you are perfectly welcome, any or all of you, to keep me company, if you like."

To follow the conversation that ensued would be little more than again to go over a story which we feel has been already impressed with tiresome reiteration on the reader. Whatever had failed in Sedley's narrative, Julia's ready wit and quick intelligence had supplied by conjecture, and they talked on till late into the night, bright gleams of future projects shooting like meteors across the placid heaven of their enjoyment, and making all bright around them.

Before they parted it was arranged that each should take his separate share of the inquiry, for there were registries to be searched, dates confirmed in several places; and while L'Estrange was to set out for Louvain, and Jack for Savoy, Sedley himself took charge of the weightier question to discover St. Michel, and prove the burial of Godfrey Bramleigh.

CHAPTER LXVII.

A WAYFARER.

WHEN the time came for the several members of the family at the villa to set out on the search after evidence, Jack, whose reluctance to leave home—he called it “home”—increased with every day, induced Outbill to go in his stead, a change which even Mr. Sedley himself was forced to admit was not detrimental to the public service.

Cutbill's mission was to Aix, in Savoy, to see and confer with Marie Pracontal, the first wife of Baldassare. He arrived in the nick of time, for only on that same morning had Baldassare himself entered the town, in his galley-slave uniform, to claim his wife and ask recognition amongst his fellow-townsmen. The house where she lived was besieged by a crowd, all more or less eager in asserting the woman's cause, and denouncing the pretensions of a fellow covered with crimes, and pronounced dead to all civil rights. Amid execrations and insults, with threats of even worse, Baldassare stood on a chair in the street, in the act of addressing the multitude, as Cutbill drew nigh. The imperturbable self-possession, the cool courage of the man—who dared to brave public opinion in this fashion and demand a hearing for what in reality was nothing but a deliberate insult to the people around him whose lives he knew, and whose various social derelictions he was all familiar with,—was positively astounding. “I have often thought of you, good people,” said he, “while at the galleys; and I made a vow to myself that the first act of my escape, if ever I should escape, should be to visit this place and thank you for every great lesson I have learned in life. It was here, in this place, I committed my first theft; it was yonder in that church I first essayed sacrilege. It was you, amiable and gentle people, who gave me four associates who betrayed each other, and who died on the drop or by the guillotine, with a courage worthy of Aix; and it was from you I received that pearl of wives who is now married to a third husband and denies the decent rights of hospitality to her first.”

This outrage was now unbearable; a rush was made at him, and he fell amongst the crowd, who had torn him limb from limb but for the intervention of the police, who were driven to defend him with fixed bayonets. “A warm reception I must say,” cried the fellow, as they led him away bleeding and bruised to the gaol.

It was not a difficult task for Cutbill to obtain from Marie Pracontal the details he sought for. Smarting under the insults and scandal she had been exposed to on the day before, she revealed everything, and signed in due form a *procès verbal* drawn up by a notary of the place, of her marriage with Baldassare, the birth of her son Anatole, with the dates of his birth and baptism, and gave up besides some letters which he had written while at the naval school of Genoa. What became of him afterwards she knew not, nor indeed seemed to care. The cruelties of the father had

poisoned her mind against the son, and she showed no interest in his fate and wished not to hear of him.

Cutbill left Aix on the third day, and was slowly strolling up the Mont Cenis pass in front of his horses, when he overtook the very galley-slave he had seen addressing the crowd at Aix. "I thought they had sent you over the frontier into France, my friend," said Cutbill, accosting him like an old acquaintance.

"So they did, but I gave them the slip at Culoz, and doubled back. I have business at Rome, and couldn't endure that round-about way by Marseilles."

"Will you smoke? may I offer you a cigar?"

"My best thanks," said he, touching his cap politely. "They smashed my pipe, those good people down there; like all villagers they resent free speech, but they'd have learned something had they listened to me."

"Perhaps your frankness was excessive."

"Ha! you were there, then? Well, it was what Diderot calls self-sacrificing sincerity; but all men who travel much and mix with varied classes of mankind, fall into this habit. In becoming cosmopolitan you lose in politeness."

"Signor Baldassare, your conversation interests me much. Will you accept a seat in my carriage over the mountain, and give me the benefit of your society?"

"It is I that am honoured, sir," said he, removing his cap, and bowing low. "There is nothing so distinctively well-bred as the courtesy of a man in *your* condition to one in *mine*."

"But you are no stranger to me."

"Indeed! I remarked you called me by my name; but I'm not aware that you know more of me."

"I can afford to rival your own candour, and confess I know a great deal about you."

"Then you have read a very chequered page, sir. What an admirable cigar. You import these, I'd wager?"

"No; but it comes to the same. I buy them in bond and pay the duty."

"Yours is the only country to live in, sir. It has been the dream of my life to pass my last days in England."

"Why not do so? I can't imagine that Aix will prefer any strong claims in preference."

"No, I don't care for Aix, though it is pretty, and I have passed some days of happy tranquillity on that little *Laos de Bourges*; but to return: to what fortunate circumstance am I indebted for the knowledge you possess of my biography?"

"You have been a very interesting subject to me for some time back. First of all, I ought to say, that I enjoy the pleasure of your son's acquaintance."

"A charming young man, I am told," said he, puffing out a long column of smoke.

"And without flattery, I repeat it—a charming young man, good-looking, accomplished, high-spirited and brave."

"You delight me, sir. What a misfortune for the poor fellow that his antecedents have not been more favourable; but you see, Mr. ——"

"Cutbill is my name."

"Mr. Cutbill, you see that I have not only had a great many irons in the fire through life, but occasionally it has happened to me that I took hold of them by the hot ends."

"And burned your fingers?"

"And burned my fingers."

They walked on some steps in silence, when Baldassare said,—

"Where, may I ask, did you last see my son?"

"I saw him last in Ireland about four months ago. We travelled over together from England, and I visited a place called Castello in his company, the seat of the Bramleigh family."

"Then you know his object in having gone there? You know who he is, what he represents, what he claims?"

"I know the whole story by heart."

"Will you favour me with your version of it?"

"With pleasure; but here is the carriage, let us get in, for the narrative is somewhat long and complicated."

"Before you begin, sir, one question: where is my son now? is he at Rome?"

"He is; he arrived there on Tuesday last."

"That is enough—excuse my interrupting—I am now at your orders."

The reader will readily excuse me if I do not follow Mr. Cutbill in his story, which he told at full length, and with what showed a perfect knowledge of all the circumstances. It is true he was so far disingenuous that he did not confess the claim had ever created alarm to the minds of the Bramleighs. There were certain difficulties he admitted, and no small expense incurred in obtaining information abroad, and proving, as it was distinctly proved, that no issue of Montagu Bramleigh had survived, and that the pretensions of Pracontal were totally groundless.

"And your visit to Savoy was on this very business?" asked Baldassare?

"You are right; a small detail was wanting which I was able to supply."

"And how does Anatole bear the discovery?"

"He has not heard of it; he is at Rome, paying court to an English lady of rank to whom he hopes to be married."

"And how will he bear it; in what spirit will he meet the blow?"

"From what I have seen of him, I'd say he'd stand up nobly under misfortune, and not less so here, that I know he firmly believed in his right; he was no party to the fraud."

"These frauds, as you call them, succeed every day, and when they occur in high places we have more courteous names to call them by. What say you to the empire in France?"

"I'll not discuss that question with you; it takes too wide a range."

"Anatole must bethink him of some other livelihood now, that's clear. I mean to tell him so."

"You intend to see him—to speak with him?"

"What, sir, do you doubt it? Is it that because my wife rejects me that I am to be lost to the ties of parental affection?" He said this with a coarse and undisguised mockery, and then, suddenly changing to a tone of earnestness, added,—“We shall have to link our fortunes now, and there are not many men who can give an adventurer such counsels as I can.”

“From what I know of the Bramleighs, they would willingly befriend him if they knew how, or in what way to do it.”

“Nothing easier. All men's professions can be brought to an easy test—so long as money exists.”

“Let me know where to write to you, and I will see what can be done.”

“Or, rather, let *me* have *your* address, for my whereabouts is somewhat uncertain.”

Cutbill wrote his name and Cattaro on a slip of paper, and the old fellow smiled grimly, and said,—“Ah! *that* was your clue then to this discovery. I knew Giacomo died there, but it was a most unlikely spot to track him to. Nothing but chance, the merest chance, could have led to it?”

This he said interrogatively; but Cutbill made no reply.

“You don't care to imitate *my* frankness, sir; and I am not surprised at it. It is only a fellow who has worn rags for years that doesn't fear nakedness. Is my son travelling alone, or has he a companion?”

“He had a companion some short time back; but I do not know if they are together now.”

“I shall learn all that at Rome.”

“And have you no fears to be seen there? Will the authorities not meddle with you?”

“Far from it. It is the one state in Europe where men like myself enjoy liberty. They often need us—they fear us always.”

Cutbill was silent for some time. He seemed like one revolving some project in his mind, but unable to decide on what he should do. At last he said,—

“You remember a young Englishman who made his escape from Ischia last June?”

“To be sure I do—my comrade.”

“You will be astonished to know he was a Bramleigh, a brother of the owner of the estate.”

“It was so like my luck to have trusted him,” said the other, bitterly.

"You are wrong there. He was always your friend—he is so at this moment. I have heard him talk of you with great kindness."

A careless shrug of the shoulders was the reply.

"Tell him from me," said he, with a savage grin, "that Onofrio—don't forget the name—Onofrio is dead. We threw him over the cliff the night we broke the gaol. There, let me write it for you," said he, taking the pencil from Cutbill's hand, and writing the word Onofrio in a large bold character.

"Keep that pencil-case, will you, as a souvenir?" said Cutbill.

"Give me ten francs instead, and I'll remember you when I pay for my dinner," said he, with a grating laugh; and he took the handful of loose silver Cutbill offered him, and thrust it into his pocket. "Isn't that Souza we see in the valley there? Yes; I remember it well. I'll go no further with you—there's a police-station where I had trouble once. I'll take the cross path here that leads down to the Pinarola road. I thank you heartily. I wanted a little good-nature much when you overtook me. Good-by."

He leaped from the carriage as he spoke, and crossing the little embankment of the road, descended a steep slope, and was out of sight almost in an instant.

CHAPTER LXVIII

A MEETING AND A PARTING.

IN the same room where Pracontal and Longworth had parted in anger, the two men, reconciled and once more friends, sat over their dessert and a cigar. The handsome reparation Pracontal had offered in a letter had been frankly and generously met, and it is probable that their friendship was only the more strongly ratified by the incident.

They were both dressed with unusual care, for Lady Augusta "received" a few intimate friends on that evening, and Pracontal was to be presented to them in his quality of accepted suitor.

"I think," said Longworth, laughingly, "it is the sort of ordeal most Englishmen would feel very awkward in. You are trotted out for the inspection of a critical public, who are to declare what they think of your eyes and your whiskers, if they augur well of your temper, and whether, on the whole, you are the sort of person to whom a woman might confide her fate and future."

"You talk as if I were to be sent before a jury and risk a sentence," said Pracontal, with a slight irritation in his tone.

"It is something very like it."

"And I say, there is no resemblance whatever."

"Don't you remember what Lord Byron in one of his letters says of a memorable drive through Ravenna one evening, where he was presented as the accepted? There's that hang-dog rascal that followed us through the

gardens of the Vatican this morning, there he is again, sitting directly in front of our window, and staring at us."

"Well, I take it, those benches were placed there for fellows to rest on who had few arm-chairs at home."

"I don't think, in all my experience of humanity, I ever saw a face that revolted me more. He isn't ugly, but there is something in the expression so intensely wicked, that mockery of all goodness, that Betsch puts into Mephistopheles; it actually thrills me."

"I don't see that,—there is even drollery in the mouth."

"Yes, diabolic humour, certainly. Did you see that?"

"See what?"

"Didn't you see that when I lifted my glass to my lips, he made a pantomime of drinking too, and bowed to me, as though in salutation?"

"I knew there was fun in the fellow. Let us call him over and speak to him."

"No, no, Pracontal; do not, I beseech you. I feel an aversion towards him that I cannot explain. The rascal poisons the very claret I'm drinking just by glancing at me."

"You are seldom so whimsical."

"Wouldn't you say the fellow knew we were talking of him; see, he is smiling now; if that infernal grin can be called a smile."

"I declare, I will have him over here; now don't go, sit down like a good fellow; there's no man understands character better than yourself, and I am positively curious to see how you will read this man on a closer inspection."

"He does not interest, he merely disgusts me."

Pracontal arose, drew high the window, and waved his napkin in sign to the man, who at once got up from his seat, and slowly, and half indolently, came over to the window. He was dressed in a sort of grey uniform of jacket and trousers, and wore a kerchief on his head for a cap, a costume which certainly in no degree contributed to lessen the unfavourable impression his face imparted, for there was in his look a mixture of furtiveness and ferocity positively appalling.

"Do you like him better now?" asked Longworth, in English.

And the fellow grinned at the words.

"You understand English, eh?" asked Pracontal.

"Ay, I know most modern languages."

"What nation are you?"

"A Savoyard."

"Whence do you come now?"

"From the galleys at Ischia."

"Frank that, anyhow," cried Longworth. "Were you under sentence there?"

"Yes, for life."

"For what offence?"

"For a score that I committed, and twice as many that I failed in."

"Murder, assassination?"

He nodded.

"Let us hear about some of them," said Pracontal, with interest.

"I don't talk of these things, they are bygones, and I'd as soon forget them."

"And do you fancy they'll be forgotten up there?" said Pracontal, pointing upward as he spoke.

"What do you know about 'up there'?" said he sternly, "more than myself? Are not your vague words 'up there' the proof that it's as much a mystery to you as to me?"

"Don't get into theology with him, or you'll have to listen to more blasphemy than you bargain for," whispered Longworth; and whether the fellow overheard or merely guessed the meaning of the words, he grinned diabolically, and said,—

"Yes, leave that question there."

"Are you not afraid of the police, my friend?" asked Longworth. "Is it not in their power to send you back to those you have escaped from?"

"They might with another, but the Cardinal Secretary knows me. I have told him I have some business to do at Rome, and want only a day or two to do it, and he knows I will keep my word."

"My faith, you are a very conscientious galley-slave!" cried Pracontal. "Are you hungry?" and he took a large piece of bread from the side-board and handed it to him. The man bowed, took the bread, and laid it beside him on the window-board.

"And so you and Antonelli are good friends?" said Longworth sneeringly.

"I did not say so. I only said he knew me, and knew me to be a man of my word."

"And how could a Cardinal know——?" when he got thus far he felt the unfairness of saying what he was about to utter, and stopped, but the man took up the words with perfect calmness, and said:—

"The best and the purest people in this world will now and then have to deal with the lowest and the worst, just as men will drink dirty water when they are parched with thirst."

"Is it some outlying debt of vengeance, an old vendetta, detains you here?" asked Longworth.

"I wouldn't call it that," replied he slowly, "but I'd not be surprised if it took something of that shape, after all."

"And do you know any other great folk?" asked Pracontal, with a laugh. "Are you acquainted with the Pope?"

"No, I have never spoken to him. I know the French envoy here, the Marquis de Caderousse. I know Field-Marshal Kleinkoff. I know Brassieri—the Italian spy—they call him the Duke of Brassieri."

"That is to say, you have seen them as they drove by on the Corso, or walked on the Pincian?" said Longworth.

"No, that would not be acquaintance. When I said 'know' I meant it."

"Just as you know my friend here, and know *me* perhaps?" said Pracontal.

"Not only him, but *you*," said the fellow with a fierce determination.

"*Me*, know me? what do you know about *me*?"

"Everything," and now he drew himself up, and stared at him defiantly.

"I declare I wonder at you, Anatole," whispered Longworth. "Don't you know the game of menace and insolence these rascals play at?" and again the fellow seemed to divine what passed, for he said:—

"Your friend is wrong this time. I am not the cheat he thinks me."

"Tell me something you know about me," said Pracontal, smiling; and he filled a goblet with wine, and handed it to him.

The other, however, made a gesture of refusal, and coldly said,—
"What shall it be about? I'll answer any question you put to me."

"What is he about to do?" cried Longworth. "What great step in life is he on the eve of taking?"

"Oh, I'm not a fortune-teller," said the man, roughly; "though I could tell you that he's not to be married to this rich Englishwoman. That fine bubble is burst already."

Pracontal tried to laugh, but he could not; and it was with difficulty he could thunder out,—
"Servants' stories and lacqueys' talk!"

"No such thing, sir. I deal as little with these people as yourself. You seem to think me an impostor; but I tell you I am less of a cheat than either of you. Ay, sir, than you, who play fine gentleman, *mi lordo*, here in Italy, but whose father was a land-steward; or than you——"

"What of me—what of *me*?" cried Pracontal, whose intense eagerness now mastered every other emotion.

"You! who cannot tell who or what you are, who have a dozen names, and no right to any of them; and who, though you have your initials burned in gunpowder in the bend of your arm, have no other baptismal registry. Ah! do I know you now?" cried he, as Pracontal sank upon a seat, covered with a cold sweat and fainting.

"This is some rascally trick. It is some private act of hate. Keep him in talk till I fetch a gendarme." Longworth whispered this, and left the room.

"Bad counsel that he has given you," said the man. "My advice is better. Get away from this at once—get away before he returns. There's only shame and disgrace before you now."

He moved over to where Pracontal was seated, and placing his mouth close to his ear, whispered some words slowly and deliberately.

"And are you Niccolò Baldassare?" muttered Pracontal.

"Come with me, and learn all," said the man, moving to the door; "for I will not wait to be arrested and made a town talk."

Pracontal arose and followed him.

The old man walked with a firm and rapid step. He descended the stairs that led to the Piazza del Popolo, crossed the wide piazza, and issued from the gate out upon the Campagna, and skirting the ancient wall, was soon lost to view among the straggling hovels which cluster at intervals beneath the ramparts. Pracontal continued to walk behind him, his head sunk on his bosom, and his steps listless and uncertain, like one walking in sleep. Neither were seen more after that night.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE LAST OF ALL.

ALL the emissaries had returned to the villa except Sedley, who found himself obliged to revisit England suddenly, but from whom came a few lines of telegram, stating that the "case of Pracontal de Bramleigh v. Bramleigh had been struck out of the cause list; Kelson a heavy loser, having made large advances to plaintiff."

"Wasn't it like the old fox to add this about his colleague? As if any of us cared about Kelson, or thought of him!"

"Good fortune is very selfish, I really believe," said Nelly. "We have done nothing but talk of ourselves, our interests, and our intentions for the last four days, and the worst of it is, we don't seem tired of doing so yet."

"It would be a niggardly thing to deny us that pleasure, seeing what we have passed through to reach it," cried Jack.

"Who'll write to Marion with the news?" said Augustus.

"Not I," said Jack; "or if I do it will be to sign myself 'late Sam Rogers.'"

"If George accepts the embassy chaplaincy," said Julia, "he can convey the tidings by word of mouth."

"To guess by his dreary face," said Jack, "one would say he had really closed with that proposal. What's the matter, old fellow; has the general joy here not warmed your heart?"

L'Estrange, pale and red alternately, blundered out a few scarcely coherent words; and Julia, who well knew what feelings were agitating him, and how the hopes that adversity had favoured might be dashed, now that a brighter fortune had dawned, came quickly to his rescue, and said, "I see what George is thinking of. George is wondering when we shall all be as happy and as united again, as we have been here, under this dear old roof."

"But why should we not?" broke in Augustus. "I mean to keep the anniversary of our meeting here, and assemble you all every year at this place. Perhaps I have forgotten to tell you that I am the owner of the villa. I have signed the contract this morning."

A cry of joy—almost a cheer—greeted this announcement, and Augustus went on.

"My ferns, and my green beetles, and my sea anemonies, as Nelly enumerates them, can all be prosecuted here, and I purpose to remain and live here."

"And Castello?"

"Jack will go and live at Castello," continued he. "I have interceded with a lady of my acquaintance"—he did not glance at Julia, but she blushed as he spoke—"to keep a certain green room, with a little stair out of it down to the garden, for me when I go there. Beyond that I reserve nothing."

"We'll only half value the gift without you, old fellow," said Jack, as he passed his arm around her, and drew her fondly towards him.

"As one of the uninstructed public," interposed Outbill, "I desire to ask, who are meant by 'We'?"

A half insolent toss of the head from Julia, meant specially for the speaker, was, however, seen by the others, who could not help laughing at it heartily.

"I think the uninstructed public should have a little deference for those who know more," broke in Jack, tartly, for he resented hotly whatever seemed to annoy Julia.

"Tom Outbill is shunted off the line, I see," said Outbill, mournfully.

"If he were," cried Augustus, "we should be about the most worthless set of people living. We owe him much, and like him even more."

"Now, that's what I call handsome," resumed Outbill, "and if it wasn't a moment when you are all thinking of things a precious sight more interesting than T. C., I'd ask permission to return my acknowledgments in a speech."

"Oh, don't make a speech, Mr. Outbill," said Julia.

"No, ma'am. I'll reserve myself till I return thanks for the bridesmaids."

"Will no one suppress him?" said Julia, in a whisper.

"Oh, I am so glad you are to live at Castello, dearest," said Nelly, as she drew Julia to her, and kissed her. "You are just the châtelaine to become it."

"There is such a thing as losing one's head, Nelly, out of sheer delight, and when I think I shall soon be one of you I run this risk; but tell me, dearest"—and here she whispered her lowest—"why is not our joy perfect? Why is poor George to be left out of all this happiness?"

"You must ask him that," muttered she, hiding her head on the other's shoulder.

"And may I, dearest?" cried Julia, rapturously. "Oh, Nelly, if there be one joy in the world I would prize above all it would be to know you were doubly my sister—doubly bound to me in affection. See, darling, see—even as we are speaking—George and your brother have

walked away together. Oh, can it be—can it be? Yes, dearest," cried she, throwing her arm around her; "your brother is holding him by the hand, and the tears are falling along George's cheek; his happiness is assured, and you are his own."

Nelly's chest heaved violently, and two low deep sobs burst from her, but her face was buried in Julia's bosom, and she never uttered a word. And thus Julia led her gently away down one of the lonely alleys of the garden, till they were lost to sight.

Lovers are proverbially the very worst of company for the outer world, nor is it easy to say which is more intolerable—their rapture or their reserve. The overweening selfishness of the tender passion conciliates no sympathy; very fortunately, it is quite indifferent to it. If it were not all-sufficing, it would not be that glorious delirium that believes the present to be eternal, and sees a world peopled only by two.

What should we gain, therefore, if we loitered in such company? They would not tell us *their* secrets—they would not care to hear ours. Let it be enough to say that, after some dark and anxious days in life, fortune once more shone out on those whom we saw so prosperous when first we met them. If they were not very brilliant nor very good, they were probably—with defects of temper and shortcomings in high resolve—pretty much like the best of those we know in life. Augustus, with a certain small vanity that tormented him into thinking that he had a lesson to read to the world, and that he was a much finer creature than he seemed or looked, was really a generously-minded and warm-hearted fellow, who loved his neighbour—meaning his brother or his sister—a great deal better than himself.

Nelly was about as good as—I don't think better than—nineteen out of every twenty honestly brought-up girls, who, not seduced by the luxuries of a very prosperous condition, come early to feel and to know what money can and what it cannot do.

Jack had many defects of hot temper and hastiness, but on the whole was a fine sailor-like fellow, carrying with him through life the dashing hardihood that he would have displayed in a breach or on a boarding, and thus occasionally exuberant, where smaller and weaker traits would have sufficed. Such men, from time to time, make troublesome first lieutenants, but women do not dislike them, and there is an impression abroad that they make good husbands, and that all the bluster they employ towards the world subsides into the mildest possible murmur beside the domestic hearth-rug.

Marion was not much more or much less than we have seen her; and though she became, by the great and distinguished services of her husband, a countess, she was not without a strange sentiment of envy for a certain small vicarage in Herts, where rosy children romped before the latticed porch, beneath which sat a very blooming and beautiful mother, and worked as her husband read for her. A very simple little home sketch; but it was the page of a life where all harmonized and all went smoothly

on : one of those lives of small ambitions and humble pleasures which are nearer Paradise than anything this world gives us. "

Temple Bramleigh was a secretary of legation, and lived to see himself—in the uniformity of his manuscript, the precision of his docketing, and the exactness of his sealing-wax,—the pet of "the Office." Acolytes, who swung incense before permanent secretaries, or held up the vestments of chief clerks, and who heard the words which drop from the high priests of foolscap, declared Temple was a rising man ; and with a brother-in-law in the Lords, and a brother rich enough to contest a seat in the Lower House, one whose future pointed to a high post and no small distinction : for, happily for us, we live in an age where self-assertion is as insufficient in public life as self-righteousness in religion, and our merits are always best cared for by imputed holiness.

The story of these volumes is of the Bramleighs, and I must not presume to suppose that my reader interests himself in the fate of those secondary personages who figure in the picture. Lady Augusta, however, deserves a passing mention, but perhaps her own words will be more descriptive than any of mine ; and I cannot better conclude than with the letter she wrote to Nelly, and which ran thus :—

" DEAREST CHILD,—

" Villa Altieri, Rome.

" How shall I ever convey to you one-half the transport, the joy, the ecstasy I am filled with by this glorious news ! There is no longer a question of law or scandal or exposure. Your estates are your own, and your dear name stands forth untarnished and splendid, as it has ever done. It is only as I bethink me of what you and dearest Augustus and darling Jack must have gone through that I spare you the narrative of my own sufferings, my days of sorrow, my nights of crying. It was indeed a terrific trial to us all, and those horrid stories of hair turning white from grief made me rush to the glass every morning at daybreak with a degree of terror that I know well I shall never be able to throw off for many a year ; for I can assure you, dearest, that the washes are a mistake, and most pernicious ! They are made of what chemists call Ethiops mineral, which is as explosive as nitro-glycerine ; and once penetrating the pores, the head becomes, as Doctor Robertson says, a 'charged shell.' Can you fancy anything as horrible ? Incipient greyness is best treated with silver powder, which, when the eyelashes are properly darkened *at the base*, gives a very charming lustre to the expression. On no account use gold powder.

" It was a Mr. Longworth, a neighbour of yours, whom you don't know, brought me the first news ; but it was soon all over Rome, for his father—I mean Pracontal's—was formerly much employed by Antonelli, and came here with the tidings that the mine had exploded, and blown up only themselves. A very dreadful man his father, with a sabre-scar down the cheek, and deep marks of manacles on his wrists and ankles ; but wouldn't take money from the Cardinal, nor anything but a passport.

And they went away, so the police say, on foot, P. dressed in some horrid coarse clothes like his father; and oh, darling, how handsome he was, and how distinguished-looking! It was young France, if you like; but, after all, don't we all like the Boulevard de Ghept better than the Faubourg St. Germain? He was very witty, too; that is, he was a master of a language where wit comes easy, and could season talk with those nice little flatteries which, like floriture in singing, heighten the charm but never impair the force of the melody. And then, how he sang! Imagine Mario in a boudoir with a cottage piano accompaniment, and then you have it. It is very hard to know anything about men, but, so far as I can see, he was not a cheat; he believed the whole stupid story, and fancied that there had been a painter called Lami, and a beautiful creature who married somebody and was the mother of somebody else. He almost made me believe it, too; that is, it bored me ineffably, and I used to doze over it, and when I awoke I wasn't quite sure whether I dreamed he was a man of fortune or that such was a fact. Do you think he'll shoot himself? I hope he'll not shoot himself. It would throw such a lasting gloom over the whole incident that one could never fall back upon it in memory without deep sorrow; but men are so essentially selfish I don't think that this consideration would weigh with him.

"Some malicious people here circulated a story that he had made me an offer of marriage, and that I had accepted it. Just as they said some months ago that I had gone over to Rome, and here I am still, as the police-sheet calls me, a 'Widow and a Protestant.' My character for eccentricity exposes me naturally to these kinds of scandal; but, on the other hand, it saves me from the trouble of refuting or denying them. So that I shall take no notice whatever either of my conversion or my marriage, and the dear world—never ill-natured when it is useless—will at last accept the fact, small and insignificant though it be, just as creditors take half-a-crown in the pound after a bankruptcy.

"And now, dearest, is it too soon, is it too importunate, or is it too indelicate to tell your brother that, though I'm the most ethereal of creatures, I require to eat occasionally, and that, though I am continually reproved for the lowness of my dresses, I still do wear some clothes. In a word, dearest, I am in dire poverty, and to give me simply a thousand a year is to say, be a casual pauper. No one—my worst enemy—and I suppose I have a few who hate and would spitefully use me—can say I am extravagant. The necessities of life, as they are called, are the costly things, and these are what I can perfectly well dispense with. I want its elegancies, its refinements, and these one has so cheaply. What, for instance, is the cost of the bouquet on your dinner-table? Certainly not more than one of your entrées; and it is infinitely more charming and more pleasure-giving. My coffee costs me no more out of Sévres than out of a white mug with a lip like a milk-pail; and will you tell me that the Mocha is the same in the one as the other? What I want is that life should be picturesque, that its elegancies should so surround one that

its coarser, grosser elements be kept out of sight; and this is a cheap philosophy. My little villa here—and nothing can be smaller—affords it; but come and see, dearest—that is the true way—come and see how I live. If ever there was an existence of simple pleasures it is mine. I never receive in the morning—I study. I either read improving books—I'll show you some of them—or I converse with Monsignore Galloni. We talk theology and mundane things at times, and we play *besique*, and we flirt a little; but not as you would understand flirtation. It is as though a light zephyr stirred the leaves of the affections and shook out the perfume, but never detached a blossom nor injured a bud. Monsignore is an adept at this game: so serious, and yet so tender, so spiritual, and, at the same time, so compassionate to poor weak human nature—which, by the way, he understands in its conflicts with itself, its motives, and its struggles as none of your laymen do. Not but poor Pracontal had a very ingenious turn, and could reconcile much that coarser minds would have called discrepant and contradictory.

"So that, dearest, with less than three thousand, or two five hundred, I must positively go to gaol. It has occurred to me that, if none care to go over to that house in Ireland, I might as well live there, at least for the two or three months in the year that the odious climate permits. As to the people, I know they would doat on me. I feel for them very much, and I have learned out here the true chords their natures respond to. What do you say to this plan? Would it not be ecstasy if you agreed to share it? The cheapness of Ireland is a proverb. I had a grand-uncle who once was Viceroy there, and his letters show that he only spent a third of his official income.

"I'd like to do this, too, if I only knew what my official income was. Ask Gusty this question, and kiss every one that ought to be kissed, and give them loves innumerable, and believe me ever your

"Doting mamma (or mamina, that's prettier),

"AUGUSTA BRAMLEIGH.

"I shall write to Marion to-morrow. It will not be as easy a task as this letter; but I have done even more difficult ones. So they are saying now that Culduff's promotion was a mere mistake; that there never was such a man as Sam Rogers at all—no case—no indemnity—no escape—no anything. O dear me, as Monsignore says, what rest have our feet once we leave total incredulity?"

Glimpses of Mauritius.

Few fairer islands can be compassed by the sea than Mauritius. When I first saw it the circumstances of the three preceding weeks had prepared me to be pleased with land in any form, but the lovely aspects of the welcome isle exceeded my highest hopes. Twenty-two days of semi-starvation in a small cranky brig, where, with seven other passengers, I shared the conveniences of a deck-house not much larger than a big packing-case, had led me to regard our voyage's end with feelings of unusual desire. At that time no regular communication existed between the South-east African port I had left, and port Louis. Now steamers pass monthly between the two places, and the passage is made pleasantly enough in eight or nine days. But at that time casual sailing-vessels offered the only available facilities of transit. My brig was a smart craft in her way, but her builders never designed her for passengers. The Scotch skipper, who had never been in those seas before, had given up his sleeping cabin to the wife and children of a fellow-voyager, who, together with myself and the captain, were stowed away overnight on lockers and in extemporised bunks, made about a foot too short for their occupants, in the little box which served as saloon.

The brig was empty, and carried only about sixty tons of sand as ballast. After we had been at sea ten days the vessel began to leak slightly; the consequence was that the sand assumed a semi-liquid state, choked the pumps, and made it necessary to bale out the water with buckets. Had bad weather come on, this shifting ballast might have been fatal to us all, but at that time of the year the South Indian Ocean is blessed by "calm seas, propitious gales," and our lively little vessel bounded through the water with just sufficient vivacity to spoil our meals. What those meals were I will not minutely say. For several days one skinny fowl per diem was all the dinner set down before seven hungry and hearty people. After a fortnight all the drinkables ran out. No one with the least susceptibility of palate could touch the foul, brackish water, except, indeed, when we managed to counteract the vileness of its flavour by a free intermixture of eau-de-cologne, lime-juice, and essence of ginger.

Down in the hold we had four very interesting passengers. They were ostriches on their way to Australia, where a friend on board intended to dispose of them. These birds were an endless source of entertainment. They had all the body of the vessel to themselves. With the sand beneath them they felt as much at home as any birds could feel under such circumstances. Their efforts to keep a footing were most ludicrous.

With wings outstretched, and straddling legs, they seemed for a time quite baffled by the novelty of their situation. At last the awkward creatures found that by squatting in the sand their enjoyment of life was much enhanced, and only when the intrusion of a man from above gave them a chance of adding a few buttons to their meal of corn would they get upon their feet.

All voyages have an end, but we began to fear that ours might be an exception. When two hundred miles, by reckoning, off Mauritius, it was found that the chronometer was at least eighty miles wrong. Three days later the skipper confessed that he could not say whether we were to the east or west of the island. If the former, then our course was all right, but if the latter were the case, every mile we sailed took us further away from our destination. With our stock of food and water exhausted, the possibility of our being on a landless tack was not pleasant, and we all felt more or less anxious. That evening, just before dark, the mate thought he saw land amidst the clouds on the far horizon. We all gazed eagerly on that dim, leaden speck, and hoped for the best. Long before daylight dawned the men of our party were gathered on the larboard side of the deck, smoking the time away, and waiting patiently for the morning. At last we made out in the clear starlight a dark appearance just ahead. It might be a bank of clouds, of course, but to our common satisfaction it neither moved nor faded. Gradually the mass took distinct and stationary form, until, as the yellow flush of dawn cleared the prospect, the peaks and rugged outline of our destination lay stretched before us.

That was a truly joyous morning when the rugged outline of the island lay before us, and few prospects can be fairer than that presented by Mauritius as seen from the sea. The island does not, as so often is the case, lift itself from the ocean in one mass of rising ground. It may be likened to a green sloping lawn, out of which spring abruptly many steep and craggy hills. At the south end the heights are more continuous, terminating in a bold lion-shaped headland, the *Lion Couchant*. The other congeries of hills are more detached. Along the western shore there are three or four single mountains, such as the *Black River Hills* and the *Corps du Garde*, huge masses of bare rock forming an excellent foil to the rich, cane-laden, champagne plains which gently undulate around and between them. Over the plains of *St. Pierre* we get a glimpse of the wooded gorge of the *Tamarind Falls*. The huge steep-sided bulk of the *Corps du Garde* frowns over the *Plaines Wilhelms*, which lie one sheet of rustling canes around it. The tufted heights round *Cure Pipe* shut out from view the picturesque *Calebasses Mountains* behind; but right ahead, the dark, strangely crested clump of hills around *Port Louis* looms up gravely, and we eagerly descry the stopper-shaped summit of *Pieterboth*. All round the shore the plumes of the palm-tree give a thoroughly tropical aspect to the scene, and they are intermixed with the feathery stems of the ever-swaying *filao*. Below this fringe of trees the white foam of the breakers on the coral reef that surrounds the

island makes a pleasant contrast. Down to the water's edge the vegetation is fresh and varied, vying in intensity with the blue overhead, which is mottled here and there by the smoke curling from the three hundred mill-houses on the island.

Next morning we found that our brig lay in the midst of a fleet of about thirty American whalers, which had flocked to Mauritius in order to hear news of the war that had just begun. We were not in the harbour proper, but in the roadstead, about a mile and a half to seaward of where the masts of about a hundred vessels clustered thickly together in the forefront of the town.

Port Louis is hemmed in by high and steep hills on all but its seaward side. These heights rise abruptly immediately behind the town, and the only breeze it gets fairly is that from the sea. All day the lofty reflectors around concentrate the sun's rays, and prevent their dispersion. The mountains which spring almost at one bound from the sea to a height of 8,000 feet seem to glower upon the place, and the glimpses of shade and verdure one gets when in the town are not visible from shipboard. My first impressions of the place itself are these:—A wide open space, with two-storied buildings all round it, and a stone monument of Labourdonnais—the French founder of the colony—in its centre, and a ponderous drinking-fountain,—deliciously suggestive in such a climate—splashing coolly by the water-side; large dock-sheds on either hand, piled up with bags of sugar, and flanked by rows, three and four deep, of the small coasting luggers; a large pile of stone warehouses, a long row of red-roofed iron stores, a profusion of ship chandlaries, a general air of the Minorities, crossed with Mincing Lane, and smacking strongly of Calcutta; shoals of coolies, Malabars, Chinamen, and negroes—both Malayish and African, in their origin—thronging this area, and making deafening discord; stenches of the subtlest nature flagrantly pervading the air; drays, carts, carioles, and carriages scudding everywhere:—such are the first sights that greet you. Sugar, of course, is everywhere. It is in the warehouses, in the boats, in the custom-house, in the ships' bottoms, in the carts, in the wharves, and on the backs of porters; it is in the air—the predominant and the least objectionable of the prevalent odours; it is in the little tin boxes that bulge the pockets of almost every one you may meet hereabout; it is in the books, deep and heavy, of every house of trade you see around you; it is in the thoughts of every true-born Mauritian in this sugar-bound and sugar-sustained island.

Of its 80,000 inhabitants (now reduced to barely 60,000), I found about three-fourths of "coloured" parentage; the rest being mostly creoles, real Mauritians, who pride themselves in a distinction which, in some cases, is hardly perceptible, so pale-faced are some of the "coloured people" with whom a white creole would think it degradation to associate. The darker class ranges from the densest black to the faintest tinge of yellow. Many of these half or quarter castes are very handsome. You meet at every turn a swarthy face, the profile of which is really beautiful.

Sustained as these heads usually are by shapely figures, and set off by spick and span clothing—for your “coloured gentleman” is the prince of dandies—you find yourself obliged to confess that you meet with much worse-looking men amongst races of far higher pretensions. About their *morale* I say naught.

There are few architectural charms about the city. Much sameness marks the narrow angular streets. They are all macadamized, and have, on either side, narrow strips of pavement. Reeking gutters traverse them all. Man-holes, at regular distances, emit the foulest odours. Shops are plentiful enough, but without any display of plate-glass. Under a tropical sun, however, it would be madness to expose articles of any value to such a glare as you get here. I was much interested in the domestic interiors of the coloured householders. Cingalese jewellers, Chinese storekeepers, Hindoo confectioners abound, carrying on their trade in little poky places, smelling most emphatically of the East. For the Orient has its smell, distinct and recognisable, unlike any other smell to be met with among Western natives.

After some weeks' residence in Port Louis, during a healthy season, I cannot truthfully give it other than the worst sanitary character. The city is in a huge oven. By day and night during summer it is equally “muggy” and oppressive. Nor does man do anything to mitigate the natural inconveniences of the spot. In this remarkable town you meet with entire indifference to the laws that govern health. The gutters I have mentioned with a regard to the reader's feelings. The houses are cramped together, and their courtyards are too often unutterably odious. From these yards and gutters poisonous vapours steam forth, and penetrate into every dwelling. In other respects there is utter disregard of the common decencies of domestic life.

Who can wonder that such a town is every few years ravaged by epidemic disease? With awful regularity does death reappear in his most terrible form. Cholera has made repeated visitations, and slain its hosts of victims. The nervous terror with which this scourge is regarded, would be, were the matter not so grave, almost ludicrous. A few days before I left the island, two or three cases of sporadic cholera occurred, and the whole community was in agitation. At the eleventh hour hasty sanitary measures were taken: houses were drenched with chloride of lime; camphor was at a premium; an exodus into the country took place. But it was of no avail; for the disease did its work inexorably, and taught another unregarded lesson.

But of all previous outbreaks of epidemic none has equalled that which has even yet not ended. The fever common in various types along the whole sea-board of Africa appeared in Mauritius with the new year of 1867, and before the month of May was out, nearly 40,000 persons had been carried off by it. In Port Louis alone 16,000 died. Almost every inhabitant was attacked by it, not once, but as usual with jungle fever, several times. Not a doubt exists that the virulence of the outbreak was

attributable to the sanitary deficiencies of the town. The coloured people suffered most severely; nor could it be otherwise. Their quarters are known as Black Town and Malabar Town. I pity the man who essays to explore those vile places. I was compelled to do so once, at early morn, while on my way to the top of the Signal Hill. My recollections of the locality are but slight; for "holding my nose" in my handkerchief, I rushed in hot haste to get out of the scene of horror. All I know is that there was an implacable stench; a swarm of dirty, naked, discoloured brats, rolling in reeking gutters; a medley of low kennels and houses, rickety, rotten, closely packed wooden dens, pervaded by the noises of Bedlam. In these miserable tenements the coolies are herded together like pigs. They like it. It is their normal state of being: they are bred in filth, live in filth, eat, drink, and die in filth. Nothing but the strictest and closest supervision of these people would make them lead cleanly lives or keep wholesome houses. For years the formation of "Indian villages" according to fixed principles and rules, where sanitary reforms might be carried out by main force, has been proposed, but without avail.

Not that Port Louis is an ugly town to the eye. It has many pleasant though not redeeming features. At every corner in convenient localities streams of water may be seen issuing from pipes. Drinking-fountains, both in town and country, are abundant. No denizen of a cold climate can appreciate the luxury which these supplies of cold water are under a Mauritian sun in summer; and where so large a coloured population resides the value of these arrangements cannot be over-estimated. Then, too, the town has its "Company's Gardens"—a perfect paradise to the hot and weary wayfarer. This pleasant space is in the centre of the city, and is thickly planted with trees and shrubs, whose interlacing boughs give a dense shade. Under these cocoa-nut, bread-fruit, and banyan trees, one can stretch tired limbs on the many seats that are placed around fountains that purl and splash refreshingly, and watch the dark-eyed beauties who are taking the air under the charge of sombre ayahs. And at the upper end of the town is a yet more fashionable resort—the Champ de Mars. This airy expanse is covered with soft turf, and around it the Rotten Row of Mauritius runs, where, on band days, all manner of fancy vehicles, laden with blooming brunettes or blanchéd blondes, alike irresistible, are driven in state; and dandies of the first water ride dandy horses. Here, too, on moonlit nights, family groups assemble, and young and old, without distinction, play childish games with charming simplicity and freedom.

The houses in Mauritius are mostly two-storied, and built of wood, although in some cases the basement is of stone. Shingle roofs are also common, even Government House being thus covered in. These slabs of wood are obtained to a great extent out of the forests of the island, and as, after a brief exposure to the weather, they get dingy, if not black, they are not an attractive architectural feature. Some of the private

mansions in Port Louis are even handsome. They have all wide verandahs round each story, and these are often closed in with arabesque railings. The piazzas are commonly paved with mosaic tiles or polished wood, fluted pillars supporting the roof. Ornamental vases, filled with beautiful flowering plants, line the walls. Cool cane chairs and sofas offer pleasant lounges in this the usual reception-room. For in a hot climate, however spacious and well furnished a drawing-room may be, it has no charms to compare with the cool air and verdant environments of the verandah. There it is the visitor is asked to seat himself; nor will he be long there before he is besought to refresh himself with vermouth or claret, the favourite drinks of the country.

Many of the Mauritian houses are eminently characteristic of that love of display and ostentation which has helped on the serious embarrassments of the community. The establishment at Labourdonnais would do credit to an English noble. Within the walls of the château (for it deserves the name,) there are lofty apartments furnished with Parisian luxury, adapted to the circumstances of a tropical climate. Statues, globe-mirrors, marble tables, and easy chairs crowd the long verandahs. Fountains are seen and heard splashing in the gardens. A large pagoda-like pavilion in the grounds is given up to billiards. A deer-yard contains many species of elands, stags, and antelopes. Within the orchards or groves of litchie, nutmeg, orange, jack-fruit, and mango trees, several enormous turtle are found thriving. The biggest of these is reputed to be of enormous age. He was a patriarch 200 years ago, and easily carries on his back three men. An elephant is also part of the establishment. The aviary covers a large piece of ground, and is planted with shrubs and trees, so that its captives, gathered from many lands, have little cause to pine for liberty.

Few and paltry are the public buildings in the island. For its size Port Louis is about as poor in this respect as any town I know of. Government House is like a tumble-down barrack,—three stories, with a verandah round each floor, shut in by blinds or jalousies, with neither paint on the walls nor polish on the panes. The Government offices are all mean and straggling; the courts of justice have no presentable exterior; the theatre is, with its Grecian portico, the most pretentious edifice in the town. Little can be said for the Roman Catholic cathedral, except that it is massive and large, and contains one or two good pictures, which are unfortunately surrounded by many daubs. The English cathedral was once a powder magazine, and has walls of immense thickness. Port Louis is well defended. Not only are there immense barracks in the town, but on a hill directly overlooking the town, at most parts of it, in fact, rests a strong fortress, while at the mouth of the harbour, in Tonniliers Island, Fort George frowns large and formidable. Two or three regiments of the Queen's troops are stationed in the island, not merely for its internal protection, but also as a dépôt for other possessions, should disturbances arise in any of them.

I must confess to being disappointed with "mine inns" in the Isle of France. Much had been said to me about the palatial luxury of these establishments. I was to be housed like a prince, and fed like an epicure. My expectations were not realised. The "Hôtel de l'Europe" was our first destination. Our hopes ran high as we passed Government House, and neared the scene of bliss. Three weeks of hard fare on shipboard had reduced us to a point highly favourable to the enjoyment of creature comforts. A majestic gateway in a high wall admitted us to a small garden, where palms and flowering shrubs hid from view a large two-storied building, skirted from end to end with a verandah twenty feet in width, more than a hundred feet long, and paved like most ground-floors throughout the island, with marble tiles. This capacious piazza is furnished café-like, with little tables and arm-chairs, and it is here that the visitors mostly pass their time. A large hall introduces you to a marble staircase, flanked by pier-glasses, leading up to the bedrooms, which are simply furnished with iron bedsteads, hung with mosquito-curtains, and covered with superfluous thin sheets. A bit of matting, and a washhand stand complete the furniture. In such a climate more or heavier garnishing would be unpleasant.

There are but two meals daily—breakfast and dinner. It is weary work waiting for the former. Everybody in the island rises betimes, soon after sunrise. Few sluggards are there. Save for a tiny cup of strong coffee, you have to wait as patiently as may be until the morning meal is served. Truly is it a breakfast, liberal and differing little from dinner. At both a bottle of very fair *vin ordinaire* is set down for your consumption, being part of the *carte*. Mauritius gets its wines direct from France, and gets them so cheap that these light, pleasant beverages are no luxury or scarcity. I have been in several lands, and amongst different kinds of people: but I think these islanders understand the art of living as well as any, and better than most. You must go to a hot climate to appreciate claret properly—as you appreciate it here in Port Louis, when, about eleven o'clock, of a scorching forenoon, you have the goblet at your side filled with lumps of ice, imported hither in the Yankee whale-ships already talked about, and over which you pour your claret, and then sip it, while the cold morsels gradually melt as the glass requires replenishing.

As for the general composition of a Mauritian meal, it is much what French meals are everywhere. You don't long for solid or ponderous dishes, and you don't get them. There is more show than substance about these repasts; but then the hot and jaded body craves more for the fanciful than the heavy. They present a series of lilliputian dishes, garnished prettily and containing more moisture than matter. Vast masses of rice are handed round to begin with. Then comes the *currie*, *chef-d'œuvre* of the seasons' art; but delicious though it is, very skinny dramatics and pinions are found therein. Or there are chops—in other words, frizzled fragments of bone. Not that the table is devoid of

delicacies. Grayfish—two feet long, beautifully pink and white,—deserve attention. Prawns, or monstrous shrimps,—small lobsters, rather,—are a feast in themselves. Platters of mango and tomato chutney might cope even with *mal-du-mer*. Beans and peas, in all manner of dressings, cone-like artichokes, massive asparagus, piles of green peas, bowls of salad, bunches of celery, and last, though most conspicuous of all, large quantities of a kind of spinach, known locally as bread, and in immense demand,—these are the common components of a Mauritian breakfast.

The dinner differs in little except that hot joints are introduced, and occasionally "sweets" are admitted into the *menu*, though these last are usually represented by small portions of conserves and tiny pats of butter. Fruit, too, is plentiful; and the Mauritians have a charming knack of decking out their tables with coloured glass, crockery, and flowers.

But I have not done yet with the "Europe." What was it that so disgusted us with that establishment, and, despite the brilliance of its noble verandah when lighted at night by forty lanterns, shedding a fitful light on the rustling palm-leaves and the fragrant shrubs in the garden, sent us out, after a day's experience, in search of an inn more to our mind? It grieves me to say that it was the special bane of Port Louis that frightened us away. The ghost which haunts the island—uncleanliness—turned us adrift. In those particulars wherein England so differs from the Continent this hotel was inconceivably offensive. Hence our exodus to the "Hôtel Masse," an old and homelier establishment, much in repute amongst the English planters. This place had none of the pretensions of the other. It was a rambling, shaky building, not unlike English hostelrys of the old times, with a broad verandah round each story, and a dark open staircase. Even this hotel, however, in a sanitary point of view, cannot be recommended. In fact, the measure of dirt and smelliness at the two places may be set down at six for the "Europe," and at half-a-dozen for the "Masse." But then you have better attendance at the last, and the meals are better cooked. The charges are the same at all. Ten shillings a day covers a room, attendance, two meals, and two bottles of claret. Mauritius is not, therefore, the dear place it is reputed to be. The French system of no soap is in vogue here, and we were charged extra, at the rate of one-and-sixpence for a cake of brown windsor. There, too, the lavatory appliances are reduced to an absurdity. The towels are like table napkins, and the ewers hold a pint of water. Unquestionably the verandah is the best feature of hotel life. It is far the most popular. At all hours of the day and night (up to nine o'clock) the little tables are occupied by languid visitors seated near them, sipping coffee, cognac, eau-de-sucre, vermouth, or thin claret, with the inactivity which befits the climate.

Much might be written about the modes of life in Mauritius, for the islanders are not as others are in many respects. They eat differently, and drink differently. There is novelty in the way they dress, and in the manner of their lying down. The climate of Port Louis is that of a half-

heated oven ; and the state of nature, were it permissible, would be the nearest approach to bodily comfort. Here, however, extremes meet, and we have people clad, in the height of tropical summer, as though they were shivering under an Arctic winter. Their fondness for black garments at noontime is inscrutable. From the hats that cover their locks, to the polished boots that encase their feet, they are black entirely. No creole seems to think himself a man while in Port Louis, or at least a gentil-homme, unless he is dressed like an undertaker. I was told that some of these sable-clad gentry half starve, and in other ways pinch themselves, in order to wear a black surtout. This vision of black coats affects a stranger most uncomfortably. Another paradox is the assumption of white garments in many creole families as correct evening dress. One gentleman of my acquaintance received the earnest apologies of his host for the tailor's inability to supply his guest with a white coat fit to dine in. Herein the islanders are truly wise in their generation ; it would be well for them were they to begin the custom earlier in the day.

Mauritius ought certainly, if the nursery rhyme has any truth in it,⁶ to be " healthy, wealthy, and wise," as it goes to bed early and rises early. At six in the morning everybody seems up and enjoying the best hours of the day. Now it is that the marketing is done, and the papers are read, and the shops are opened, and the strolls are taken. Having sipped his cup of coffee—strong, aromatic, and inspiring ; having laved his feet in the foot-pan, miscalled a bath ; having rubbed his face with a small excuse for a towel, and dipped his fingers in the apology for a basin ; having attired his languid person *à la mode*, and scanned it in a mirror of generous area, the creole will handle his dandy bit of a cane, and descend to the *pavé*, whose intricacies he will traverse for the next hour, while the sun is scarcely yet above the huge hinder hills, and the dew still clings to the leaves. Or, perchance, he will call his carriage and take a drive, or, if more lazily disposed, may lounge away the early morn in the shade of his verandah. If he be a man of business he will go to the Exchange rooms, and have a prefatory gossip over the latest journal as he sits beneath the trees that adjoin that institution. Then comes breakfast ; and thereafter, towards eleven o'clock, the inactively active duties of the day begin. About four, or earlier, maybe, he returns to the bosom of his family, who occupy the interval between noon and sunset, either in drives about the town, or in dreary siestas in the garden or piazza. Thus may be seen many households, from paterfamilias and his spouse down through the gradations of youths and damsels to the little infant in arms, smoking cigars on the male part, or chatting on the feminine part, until the dinner-hour arrives ; when the whole of this happy family—and I use the term seriously—gather round the common board and eat currie and conserves for the next hour. There will be no exodus of the fair sex. Those gentle beings abide at the table until coffee has been served ; then there is a general adjournment to the verandah, where cigars, gossip, and music, are the order of the evening. Not for long though. Rarely after

nine is a respectable household out of bed. Before ten o'clock, most of the lights are extinguished, and the family sleeping, or courting sleep under their solitary sheets, and inevitable mosquito curtains.

To an Englishman used to hours not quite so primitive, this early closing system is a drawback. Only one hotel in Port Louis seems accessible after ten o'clock. The "Masse" closed religiously at nine o'clock or a little after. The "Europe" shuts up professedly at ten, and I have even seen a very convivial dinner-party of Frenchmen broken up at that hour, although their frantic efforts to raise cheers after the English fashion indicated a strong desire to make a night of it.

The creole Mauritians love show and splendour, and will pay high to gratify their inclinations. They like a profusion of jewellery upon their persons, and of plate upon their sideboards. They like to be equal, if not superior, in the matter of personal and domestic appointments to their neighbours. They like their mills to be as large and powerful as those around them. There are, let it be observed, many exceptions to this rule. There are highly intelligent and well-educated people who, on the other hand, do not care to go beyond their means, or to indulge in external luxuries so long as home comforts are theirs. My first remark applies more especially to townspeople. My last has more immediate reference to the country: as in my own limited circle I knew of several such households where the daily commingling under the same roof of two or three generations affords happy evidence of domestic harmony, and where hospitality is dispensed to every stranger with a thorough heartiness without display. This habit of married sons and wedded daughters living and multiplying under the parental roof is more French than English; but surely family discord must be rare where such an arrangement can be amicably carried out. As illustrative of Mauritian hospitality, I may state that to most planters' residences a "strangers' house" is attached, where accommodation of the most comfortable character awaits any passing friend or stranger. In no country can a visitor meet with kindlier treatment than in the populous Isle of France.

The point or centre of greatest amusement in Port Louis is, not its theatre, library, or *glacerie*, but its market. It is there that I spent the most enjoyable hours of my sojourn; it is there I would go first were I to visit the island again. What the charm of the place is I cannot well say. Perhaps it may be the Oriental, bazaar-like aspect of the scene; perhaps the refreshing fruits that abound there; perhaps the motley multitude of all nations, creeds, and colours that crowd the mart; perhaps a mixture of all.

To see the market to perfection you must rise betimes, and get there by six o'clock. At that hour all its treasures will be visible, and all its *habitudes* assembled. Long before daylight the vendors of produce have been plodding along the highways, bearing in large tin boxes the things they have to offer. If you pass along Chausée Street and Farquhar Street you will see where all these dealers congregate. What a scene

greet you when you pass through the massive gateway, supported by a stone lodge! which lets you through a lofty iron palisading. Babel, and nothing short of it.

Men gathered from every quarter of the globe here mingle. Mauritius is such a calling-place for the world's shipping as you find nowhere else, and all nations and tongues are represented in its streets—Nubians, black-skinned and bare-legged, like their Mozambique brethren, whose vaster mouths are grinning everywhere; Hindoos of all castes, and colours, and races; Parsees with long robe-like *paletots*, and oddly-shaped hats, draped round with puggeries, cunningly interwoven with gold wire; long-haired, skull-capped Malabars; sharp-visaged, gaily-clad Madrassees; Greek-featured Cingalese; Arabs, solemnly bearded and turbaned, moving with ostrich-like stateliness, as though they, the faithful, were lords of all. And there is John Chinaman, with his unfailing ribbonless straw hat, and his blue calico trousers and jacket, his pigtail discreetly stowed away, coronet-wise, and his crooked eyes gleaming acquisitively as he drives a hard bargain, literally farthing by farthing. Here, too, the creole islanders, black-hatted and coated as usual, early as is the day, lounge lazily, with a few blue-habited planters from the country, and here and there a female figure. There is the garrison party of British soldiers purveying for the mess, and too experienced in their work to be readily taken in. And here, happy sight to a loyal Englishman, are groups of Jack Tars, including a few of all nations, but in the main representing those we love best. Healthy-looking, smiling, good-natured, chaffing, but easily bamboozled, they are easily relieved of the few coins burning in their unretentive pockets. Men of the cloth are here too—priests, whose rosy cheeks and sleek faces tell a tale of good living. Sisters of Mercy, moreover, who creep cautiously and with a deprecating manner about, and who, I'll be bound, are as hard to cheat as anybody, and who, indeed, by virtue of their true and womanly office, deserve to be cheated least of any. These, and many more, are some types of human life to be met with in this curious medley of our species.

The market itself consists of a series of light elegant sheds, paved with stone or marble, and duly divided into compartments. It is about 800 feet long and 250 feet wide. Neither counters nor tables are provided for the goods offered, but simply the bare floor. Each stall-holder takes his stand, or rather his seat, upon the stones, where he squats calmly in the midst of his little piles of cabbages, fruit, potatoes, beans, pepper, ginger, tomatoes, and *so forth*. In the intervals of custom the vendor employs himself with shelling beans or picking roots. He, or she—for the fair sex are much given to the art of selling—do not overpower passers-by with demands for patronage. If you pause nigh, he looks up with dignity, and awaits your pleasure, or possibly he may hazard a remark laudatory of his wares. If you wish to buy, about one-third of what is asked will be a fair approximation to the real price. First prices are only nominal. Fine potatoes are to be had at twopence-halfpenny a pound;

eggs, three-halfpence each; celery, fourpence a bunch; brocoli, fivepence each; green mangoes, a penny each; pumpkins, sixpence each, or a half-penny a slice. Here are balls of tamarinds, most dainty material for a chutney, at a penny a pound; tiny onions can be had at three-halfpence a pound. Tolerably large egg-plants, the insides of which are stuffed with herbs and chopped meat, are the same price. Nine insipid tomatoes can be had for a halfpenny. Haricot beans, of all colours and sizes, are present everywhere. Of fruits there is a poor show, the only noticeable one being the delicious litchie—a little-known but most delicious fruit, growing in a large shrublike tree, having a hard sheath, which comes off readily, showing something like a strawberry. In taste it resembles a muscadel grape, but there is a large stone in the centre. They are sold at about two for a penny.

In the meat market there is more variety and a better quality of produce. Especially is this the case in the fish section. There is a plentiful supply of fresh turtle at a shilling per pound. There are turtle eggs, too, the best being those that are found after dissection. Noble crayfish, two feet long at least, are only one shilling and sixpence each. The crabs are small and untempting. Mangalls, a sort of catfish, are offered for one shilling and sixpence. Long-nosed guard-fish can be bought for two shillings each. But these pretty, sky-blue speckled fellows, yecept "skipjacks," are more to one's taste. One instinctively shudders before the young sharks, which look harmless and flabby enough now, but whose budding teeth are really too significant. They are good eating, nevertheless, weigh five pounds, and cost one shilling and sixpence. Other fish are here in abundance, and in strange variety of form and colour: scarlet, orange, green and blue—flashing an hour or two ago, meteor-like, through the limpid waters of the Indian Sea.

Pass on to the flesh-stalls. The beef consumed in the island is very fair to the eye, and far from inestimable as to quality. Prices range, according to cut, from sixpence to sevenpence-halfpenny a pound. Mutton is dearer, and of indifferent quality, being tough, and one shilling per pound. Pork was not to be seen, and for certain remarkable reasons it is not in repute amongst the *white* residents. A full-grown fowl sells for three shillings, but then how mean and scraggy, how leggy and skinny is the bird! Turkey and geese, however, are abundant. Many a fine flock may you see cackling or strutting round the shabby hut of some Malabar poulterer. Bread is white, spongy, and threepence a pound; slices thereof you may partake of at the coffee-stalls, where dark Phyllises dispense cupfuls of coffee to large groups of customers, most of whom are sailors or wayfarers.

I ought, perhaps, to have said that all the stall-holders in the market are coloured people, either Indian coolies or Chinamen. They are bound to exhibit signboards, and the inscriptions on some of these are highly amusing and graphic. Fine pretensions mark them all. These retailers have souls above those of their European rivals, and no plain presentment

of a name unadorned by any prefix will do for them. Take, for instance, these literal transcriptions of one or two.

Mr. Scholastique,
Belle Fruit.

The next is a publican. Possibly he may be a noted epicure, and his own tastes are therefore a guarantee of excellence :

Mr. K. Montoussa,
My Grocer.

A wizened, puckered little Hindoo announces himself as

Mr. Ramsamy.

The following, though puzzling, can be solved :

Mr. Appasamy. Vege.
Tables. Fruits.

Upon a board of scant dimensions appears this declaration :

Mr. Souptave,
N. Vegetable.
S.

We are next introduced to an historical character impersonated by a very small boy :

Mr. Abdoel Kader,
Grocer.

Then comes a thrilling announcement. How terse, and expressive of the stout, copper-hued Juno beneath :

Madame.

My last might do for the second column in *The Times*. It yet baffles my powers of comprehension :

Mr. Troovanga.
Dayadiachy.
Pakee Kee Padiachy.
Draper.

While taking these strange inscriptions down, I became the unconscious cause of intense anxiety to each of the vendors in turn. Anxious looks were cast ; low whispers interchanged. At last, unable to restrain their curiosity any longer, one of the "inscribed" inquired of my companion whether I was not a police commissioner, and what dire fate was awaiting them for what unknown offence.

No better way to get a good idea of the topography of Mauritius can be desired than to make a trip up the Pouce. There are two hills in Mauritius distinguished by a peculiar conformation of their summits. They are the highest points in the island. One is Pieterboth, so called after a sailor who immortalized himself by being the first to scale this perilous pinnacle. The peak itself is a difficult point to reach, as the sides are like a wall. But crowning this cone is a large mass of rock like a decanter-topper. As the shelving sides of this odd-looking apex overhang

the point in which it rests, the ascent can only be performed with the aid of kites, rope-ladders, and lines. On this account, and as the trip takes three days to accomplish, it is but rarely attempted, and then mostly by nautical men. La Pouce, on the other hand, is more accessible, and nearer the town, rising directly at the back of the Port Louis to an equal height and named from the thumb-like cone which crowns it.

Early one morning, before the sun rose, four Englishmen, of whom I was one, started, staff in hand, and with a Malabar breakfast-carrier behind them, for this point. They were roughly and coolly clad. Down College Street and up to the Chat d'Or they passed, through the washing ground. At this place a large iron pipe or tube ejects a torrent of water, shooting forward for several feet. Beyond this the stone-strewn hollow is filled from an early hour with washermen and washerwomen, whose shrill screeching and merciless battering of linen creates a dreadful uproar. Beyond this we ascend through a rough and stony country, leaving the houses behind. On our left is the Chat d'Or, a pleasant shady retreat, where several wise townsmen have taken refuge. Before long the friendly shade of bushes is gained, and we are fairly in the Pouce valley. Our course now lies along a ledge of rock skirting the foot of a tremendous precipice, and also overlooking a deep gorge, beyond which uprise the abrupt hills that form the other side of the amphitheatre. After traversing a rich grove of trees along a gradually ascending road, made many years ago by the French soldiers, the open brow of a lower tier of hills is gained. We get stray glimpses of the panoramic scene behind, and of the gloomy ravines in front. For some distance the path passes along this neck or ridge, until it turns round the hill, and we find a delicious stream of cool and clear water purling by the wayside. A walk of half a mile brought us into a dark, cold, and dense jungle, consisting of small trees packed in with ferns of all shapes and varieties. So close is the foliage overhead, and so cool the spot, that the dew yet hangs about every twig and blade, and the ground is quite damp. Along a very narrow and tortuous pass, and under trees that barely allow us to proceed without stooping, we pick our way, now descending, now rising, until the ascent becomes palpable. Half a mile, or a mile, of this sort of work ends in the bush getting smaller, until it leaves us on either side, and we are at the bottom of the Pouce, or thumb-like cone, an almost perpendicular pinnacle, about 150 feet in height. Now for a scramble. Without looking behind, or seeing anything but the rock before us, we go at it, hands and knees, striding up this boulder; heaving our bodies up by bits of herbage that protrude from the sheer side of this cliff; climbing like monkeys, until, before we know what we are passing over or how we are progressing, the summit is gained, and our breath is nearly taken away, as, squatting down on the rock, we realise the steepness of the narrow spire we have surmounted.

What a view it is, what a plunge it would be! Nothing obtrudes to

mar the prospect at our feet. The few square feet of rock on which we are crouching, unaccustomed yet to so dizzy an altitude, seem suspended in the air. Just below us, as a stone might drop, is an undulating mass of forest, lining the shoulder on which the cone rests, and plumed with tree ferns. On one side are Pieterboth, cliff-like, and his fellow mountains. At his feet are sugar plantations, but at ours is the valley of the Chat d'Or, shut in by ranges of hills, and disclosing the town of Port Louis, with its harbour, and forts, and shipping, clearly outlined as in a map. Far to the north stretches the plain of Pamplemousses, with its strongly indented shore, and its yellow gleam of cane-fields. Far to the east and south are seen, beyond an intervening series of ravines and mountains, the Plaines Wilhelms, the Corps du Garde, and the distant Lion Couchant buttressing the island westward. Round on the land side a glorious panorama of champagne country, squared all over like a chess-board with numberless plantations, and sprinkled with tall chimneys and sugar-buildings in the centre of every emerald square, spreads out below us. There is an estate about twelve hundred feet beneath, but so directly under our eyes that every movement in it is visible, and it seems as if our voices must surely be heard there. This magnificent stretch of sugar-country, comprising the districts of Moka, Plaines Wilhelms, and Vacoa, shows us at one glance what Mauritius is. Beyond this the hills of Flacq, Rempart, and, finally, of Grandport, peaked and shaggy, shut in the landward view. Imagine this glorious revelation of land and water, as seen under a tropical sun, on a summer morning. Imagine this vision of a whole fair and fertile island, framed in by the ocean,—and that ocean the rich Indian Sea,—calm and glittering, melting away amid many a sunbeam into the haze of the horizon, and flecked by the white sails of the merchantmen that are ever flocking there. Imagine, I say, this magnificent unfolding of a large and populous island, with its closely packed habitations, its jostling cane-fields, its bristling sugar-mills, and its lavish vegetation, and you may feel some of the glamour that bound us to that by no means comfortable pinnacle. Since standing there, I have seen many of the fairest landscapes in the world; and I think none present a more marvellous combination of natural beauty and human activity than may be witnessed from the summit of La Pouce.

Some Notes on *Othello*.

AS MANY who are sufficiently familiar with Shakspeare's plays have perhaps but a slight and vague knowledge of the difficulties attendant on criticism of the Shakspearian text, it may not be amiss to mention some facts concerning its history and condition, before offering to our readers a few notes, chiefly explanatory of disputed, misinterpreted, and unexplained passages in *Othello*.

Of the plays of Shakspeare it may be said that, as subjects for the critic's labours, they stand alone, and that he approaches them under circumstances altogether peculiar and different from those under which he takes in hand the works of other authors. In the ordinary exercise of his art he has to deal with texts which have been given to the world under the superintendence of the author, or, at least, of editors who represent him, and have been furnished with his manuscripts to guide their labours. But no line of Shakspeare's plays has come to the world with any such guarantee that it is what the author actually wrote. Of the thirty-seven comedies, histories, and tragedies which bear his name, seventeen were indeed printed and published separately in quartos during his life-time, but even these were given to the world without either his consent or knowledge; printed at various dates from clandestinely made transcripts of manuscript copies in the possession of theatrical managers. Nor had even these copies been directly taken from the poet's own MSS., but they were doubtless, in many cases, transcripts of transcripts to several removes from the originals, vitiated and corrupted in some parts by the tasteless interpolations or reckless omissions of the players, and in others mutilated and curtailed for the convenience of managers.

Seven years after Shakspeare's death the first collected edition was published of thirty-six only of the plays attributed to him, *Pericles*, which in subsequent editions makes the thirty-seventh, being omitted. In the preface to this,—the folio of 1623, or the first folio, as it is usually called,—the editors, Heminge and Condell the players, profess that whereas before the reader had been "abused with divers stolne and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of injurious impostors that exposed them, even those are now offered to his view cured and perfect of their limbes; and all the rest" (*i.e.* the twenty plays which had not been previously printed) "absolute in their numbers as he conceived them." In this, however, they professed much more than they performed. The folio of 1623 was, beyond all question, made up in part from those very quartos which were denounced as surreptitious, mutilated, and worthless; and this so carelessly, that obvious typographical errors are again

and again reproduced in the former from the latter. Indeed, at this time all Shakspeare's original MSS. had probably perished, the greater number in the fire by which the Globe Theatre was destroyed in 1613, the rest perhaps by the neglect of those in whose hands they were, and who little knew what a priceless treasure any one of them would have been esteemed by a later age. Accordingly the folio of 1623,—partly consisting of reprints from the quartos, and disfigured by many of the vices which the circumstances of their production rendered inevitable; partly founded on managers' transcripts, corrupt as such transcripts could hardly fail to be, containing besides the more ordinary typographical blunders which a very careless supervision of the press allowed to remain,—affords a text sometimes bewildering in its inaccuracy.

For these reasons there is much truth in the remark of a Shakspearian critic, that "perhaps in the whole annals of English typography, there is no record of any book of any extent and any reputation having been dismissed from the press with less care and attention than the first folio." At the same time, in estimating the authority due to its text in doubtful passages, it should be borne in mind that it is the result of a comparison of several manuscript and printed copies, so far as printed copies existed at the time, carelessly, indeed, and imperfectly carried out, but still carried out, it cannot be doubted, to some extent. The players had in their hands as material for their work of collation, not only the quarto plays, but also numbers of managers' MS. copies, as well of the plays which had been published in quarto, as of those hitherto known only through the medium of the stage. Accordingly, where variances occur between the quartos and the first folio, other than such as may be due to careless and inaccurate printing, we may safely conclude that the readings given in the folio are in general the results of a comparison of the several copies which were in the possession of the editors, and a selection of what seemed to them, on consideration, the best. It is not unreasonable to suppose that on a perusal of the quarto texts, wherever a passage seemed corrupt, a collation was there made of the several copies, manuscript as well as printed, and the reading which to the editors,—men long and intimately familiar with Shakspeare's plays,—seemed genuine, was adopted into the folio; while all that did not excite their suspicion was printed off as it stood in the quartos, and so the typographical and other blunders of these in many cases reproduced. For this reason it seems to us that where the texts of the quartos and folio differ, the latter should as a general rule be preferred, as being stamped with the authority of editors not incompetent to judge, and having in their hands far more means than any previous or subsequent editors possessed for ascertaining what was more likely to be genuine.

In the second folio edition, published nine years after the first, many of the more obvious errors found in the latter were corrected, but the editor, whose ignorance and incapacity seem to have been of the most brilliant description, marred more than he mended; so that this edition is to all intents and purposes useless. In this state of things some persons,

considering all texts alike untrustworthy, have maintained that those rules which guide and confine the critic's dealings with other authors are inapplicable to the case of Shakspeare; and that conjectural emendation may here assume a wider licence than is allowed it elsewhere. "The critic," one writer says, "who takes up the work of an ordinary author—Milton, for instance—is, of course, bound by the received text. There may be misprints and errors of neglect, but they can be but few. If the editor meets with a harsh, far-fetched, unintelligible expression, his plain and only duty is to elucidate its meaning as well as he can, and to illustrate it by parallel passages from other writers. But if the editor of Shakspeare light on a similar passage, the first question which inevitably arises is whether it be corrupt or no. Not only this, but the probability fairly is that where a passage in Shakspeare is harsh or far-fetched, or unintelligible, it is corrupt, and not what Shakspeare wrote." This canon of Shakspearian criticism, however, appears to us not only startling—as indeed the writer from whom we quote admits it to be—but dangerous in the extreme, from the fact that in the nature of things it must be impossible to secure it from abuse. It renders every would-be critic his own Shakspeare. This passage appears harsh, this far-fetched, this unpoetical, this obscure—out they all go; and instead of what may perhaps be Shakspeare's, we have the smoothness and grace, the poetry and perspicuity of one who is perhaps a most meritorious and intelligent person, but no Shakspeare. There may be a considerable probability that passages which offend our ideas of what Shakspeare ought to have written, were not in fact so written by him; but the probability is infinitely greater that a conjectural reading will not restore the poet's words, except in those cases of obvious or judicious emendations of passages undeniably corrupt, which fall within the recognized and ordinary scope of the critic's duty. If it be granted that the only useful object of conjectural emendation is to restore the author's text with so high a degree of probability as to convince unprejudiced minds that his actual words have been recovered, it follows, we think, that the rules by which it is to be kept within bounds must be, in effect, the same whether the depravation of the existing text be great or little. Where the corruptness is considerable, there will no doubt be a greater probability that any given obscure passage is corrupt, but the chance that the critic will guess the true reading, without evidence to guide him, is so small as to be practically worthless. We think, therefore, that licentiousness of conjecture should be as jealously excluded from the plays of Shakspeare as from any other text into which inaccuracies may have crept from a copyist's carelessness or the errors of the press, lest sometime the student should have cause to exclaim, "*Ut olim vitiis, ita nunc remediis laboratur.*" To the emendation of obvious verbal errors, as well as to the collating copies possessing an independent authority, and drawing safe or probable inferences from their discrepancies and agreements, no reasonable person can object. But further than this, all licentious conjecture is useless, in so far as it can carry no conviction with it; and directly injurious, in so far as

it may divert the minds of readers from seeking more diligently the explanation of what was perhaps obscure in appearance only. The use of a word in an obsolete or uncommon sense, instead of that which is more familiar or modern,—the referring an adjective or verb to a nearer noun instead of to one which is a little more remote,—such apparently trifling matters as these will occasionally darken or totally conceal a meaning which becomes clear and simple when once the clue to it has been discovered. That explanation which many have failed to find, one more diligent or more fortunate than his predecessors may sometimes light upon ; but rash emendations of that which, though not understood, may be genuine, can only tend to render the darkness perpetual. In accordance with these views we shall now proceed to examine and attempt to explain, without the aid of conjectural emendation, some passages as to which the remarks of those commentators whom we have consulted seem to us unsatisfactory, generally preferring, where difference of text exists, the readings adopted by the editors of the first folio.

The word *cast* occurs four times in this play in a remarkable and unusual sense,—one in which the word, common as it is, is not elsewhere met with in Shakspeare. The following are the passages to which we refer :—

—the state,
However this may gall him with some check,
Can not with safety cast him.—Act i., 1.

Our general cast us thus early.—ii. 3.

You are but now cast in his mood.—ii. 3.

—whereon it came
That I was cast.—v. 2.

In the first passage it is applied to Othello's possible dismissal from office by the state, for the offence of carrying off Brabantio's daughter ; in the second, to Othello's dismissal of his guests at the close of an entertainment ; in the third and fourth, to Cassio's being dismissed from his lieutenancy, or cashiered. Dr. Johnson's note on the first passage is—"That is *dismiss* him, *reject* him. We still say a *cast* coat, and a *cast* serving-man." On the second, he says, "Our general cast us—that is, *appointed us to our stations*. To *cast the play* is, in the stile of the theatres, to assign to every actor his proper part." Steevens, however, observes, "Perhaps *cast us* only means dismissed us, or *got rid of our company*. So in the *Wich*, a MS. tragi-comedy by Middleton—

— she cast off
My company betimes to-night by tricks."

It is not necessary to weigh scrupulously the respective merits of these different explanations, since we can agree fully with neither. That of Dr. Johnson seems forced and improbable, and we think with Steevens that the word is used here in the same sense as in the three other passages. The quotation from Middleton, however, goes no way towards explaining this use, for "to cast off one's company" is a very different thing from

casting off the person himself, and certainly throws no light on such a phrase as "casting the person;" indeed it seems impossible to obtain the signification either of dismissing from office, or of a host courteously dismissing his guests, from the verb in its sense "to throw," without undue harshness and violence. Of the phrases cited in Dr. Johnson's note on the first passage, "cast clothes" is no doubt a shortened form of the expression "cast-off clothes," in which the participle is used in its natural and proper sense; while as to a "cast serving-man," we can say nothing, having never to our recollection met with the phrase. In it the word may have been used in the same signification of dismissal from office as in the passages on which we are commenting; or it may be a contemptuous metaphor borrowed from the ordinary expression, "cast clothes"—the serving-man being spoken of as something equally worthless with a garment which has been worn out and flung aside. It does not, however, seem possible to speak in this manner of a "cast general," or a "cast lieutenant," or "cast guests," save in a vulgar-familiar or slang form of expression, of the use of which there is no appearance in any of the passages under consideration. Before offering a conjecture as to the origin of the phrase, we will mention another use of the word "cast," which we at one time thought might perhaps explain the difficulty: this is in the expressions "cast in a suit," "cast in damages," "cast by a jury," in which old law dictionaries explain the word by the Latin verb *condemnari*. This use of "cast" comes, we think, not from the sense "thrown" as a wrestler, and therefore defeated, as it is generally explained, but from the law Latin term *cassari*, "to be quashed" or "annulled," properly used of legal proceedings, as in the entering on the roll a *cassetur breve*, "let the writ be quashed," where the plaintiff cannot deny that the defendant's answer is both true and sufficient to abate his declaration, and in the derived French law-terms *casser* and *cassation*. From being used of legal proceedings it may have come to be applied to persons who were defeated in their suits, and so may perhaps have been transferred from unsuccessful suitors dismissed from court to persons dismissed on any occasion, in which improper or metaphorical sense the word may be employed in *Othello*. On considering, however, that Shakspeare uses it thus in this one play, and in the mouths of soldiers only, it is worth while examining whether it may not be a purely military phrase, applied properly to the being cashiered, and in the one passage where *Othello* is said "to cast" his guests, by a metaphor natural on a soldier's lips, to any sort of dismissal, more especially when that dismissal is by the general. We do accordingly find that the Latin *cassari* was thus used. Ducange cites from the *Regimina Paduæ, ad annum 1818*, the following passage, in which the word means to be dismissed from military service, or cashiered: "*Facta fuit pax;—et tunc cassati fuerunt soldati,—et cassatus fuit suprascriptus capitaneus.*" From the Latin this military signification was adopted as one of the meanings of the French derivative verb *casser*; and it is well known that most of our early English terms of law, war, and the chase came by Norman importation from France.

Accordingly we have, through that channel, from *casser*, "to casseer," "to cashier," "to cashire," "to cash," "to quash," and "to cass:" all different forms of the same verb. We may perhaps, in referring "cast" to this origin, be met by an objection taken from the first of the passages in *Othello* in which it is found,—

—the state

Cannot with safety cast him,—

that if our view were correct, the verb, being in the infinitive mood, ought to be "cass" or "cash," not "cast." The answer is that the infinitive mood and present tense, being far more rarely used than the participle, soon became unknown in their true form. Accordingly, when an infinitive or a present tense was required, one was taken from the participle, which instead of "cassed" may in process of time have come to be written "cast," as "passed" was changed into "past;" and this confounding of the infinitive with the participle may have been assisted by the analogy of the more familiar "cast," "to throw," in which verb those parts have the same form. Though this word is so rarely found with the shortened spelling, it is by no means uncommon in early English in its longer form, "cassed." For instance, in a state paper of the time of Henry VIII. :—"For aunser wherunto His Highnes requyareth your Lordship to depeche from thens all such capitains with their officers as you wrote be *cassed*, for His Majeste knoweth not how to employe the same. Nevertheles, if there be any capitain of the *cassed*, which is a special man of service, His Majeste woold ere your Lordship dischargde him be advertised of him" (11 *State Papers*, 57). It may be worth while observing that a passage in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* shows that the word "cashier" was sometimes employed in Shakspeare's time to signify simply "to turn out:"—

Bardolph.—And being fay, sir, was, as they say, cashiered;

that is, Slender being drunk was put out of the house. Similarly, perhaps, *Othello* is said "to cast" his guests without its being necessarily meant that he cashiered them in the strict sense of the word.

In Act i. 8, the folio reads—

No, when light-winged toys
Of feathered Cupid seal with wanton dulness
My speculative and officed instruments,

for which the quarto has—

—when light-winged toys
And feathered Cupid foils with wanton dulness
My speculative and active instruments.

The commentators explain "speculative instruments" to mean "the eyes," but it is questionable whether this interpretation will bear scrutiny. The word "speculation" does indeed always in Shakspeare mean either the faculty or the act of seeing, but "speculative," in the only other passage in which it is found, certainly refers to the action of the mind—

Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate.—*Macbeth*, v. 4.

We think that it has this sense here, and that "my speculative instrument" means "the reasoning faculty with which I am provided." "Officed instrument" is to our ears somewhat harsh, but would doubtless signify the faculty to which the discharge of the duties of office is intrusted—that is, the mind. The reading of the quarto may by some be thought more simple and natural, affording as it does an obvious antithesis, the speculative and active instruments being the instruments of thought and action, *i. e.* the mind and the body; but no doubt the editors of the folio did not select the reading they have preferred without good reason.

Iago.—Sir, he is rash and very sudden in choler, and haply may strike at you: provoke him that he may; for even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again, but by the displanting Cassio.—ii. 2.

Dr. Johnson gives the following explanation of the phrase, "Whose qualification shall come into no true taste again." "Whose resentment shall not be so qualified, or tempered, as to be well tasted,—as not to retain some bitterness." Steevens suggests, "Perhaps qualification means fitness to preserve good order, or the regularity of military discipline," a suggestion which may be dismissed without comment. Dr. Johnson is to a certain extent right in his explanation. The verb "to qualify" is continually used by Shakspeare in the sense "to soften down and weaken the peculiar quality of anything by mixing with it something of an opposite nature or quality." Thus wine is qualified by water; harsh judgment by charity; the fire of passion by wise counsel. Hence the word comes to signify absolutely "to mitigate," "to appease;" for instance, in *King John*, v. 1. :—

This inundation of mistempered humour
Rests by you only to be qualified.

From the things, or qualities, which are so modified the word is transferred in its use to *persons* in whom they exist, as in *Winter's Tale*, iv. 8. :—

Your discontenting father strive to qualify
And bring him up to liking.

The *true taste* is the orderly and peaceful course of things, a metaphor taken no doubt from strong wine deprived of its fire and strength by water, and thus qualified to suit the taste. The last clause of the passage then means, "Who shall not be appeased and brought to a quiet and orderly state again."

Which thing to do,
If this poor trash of Venice whom I trace
For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,
I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;
Abuse him to the Moor in the right garb,
For I fear Cassio with my nightcap too.—ii. 1

Such is the reading of the folio: the quarto reads *crush* instead of *trace*, and *rank* instead of *right*. We shall not attempt to enumerate the

explanations which have been proposed for the second and third of these lines : let the reader who is curious on this subject consult the note on the passage in the *Variorum Shakspeare*. The principal modern editors, —with the exception of Mr. Knight, who retains the readings of the folio,—change the second line to

If this poor trash of Venice whom I trash,

and instead of *right garb*, read with the quarto *rank garb*.

The adopted reading in the former portion of the passage is thus explained : " If this contemptible and worthless Venetian, whom I chide and repress for being too eager in the chase, will wait patiently till I urge him on at the proper moment," &c. The word *trash* is taken as a hunting term, signifying to restrain those hounds which are too forward or impatient, and is used in the *Tempest* in the sense here assigned to it :—

Being once perfected how to grant suits,
How to deny them ; whom to advance, and who
To trash for overtopping.—i. 2.

There are, however, several objections which seem to us almost conclusive against this ingenious reading and explanation. First, the substitution of *trash* for *trace*, or *crush*, is without a particle of authority, unless it be thought to derive support from the possibility of constructing it by engrafting the *crush* of the quarto upon the *trace* of the folio,—a truly novel method in criticism ! Secondly, the repetition of the word *trash* is offensive. It has been remarked, as to this objection, that such playing upon words is in Shakspeare's manner ; but this is only partially true, and does not apply here. In some of Shakspeare's plays it is, no doubt, very common—too much so for the taste of the present age ; but in others, it scarcely occurs at all. *Othello* is a play of the latter class ; and it seems hardly reasonable to argue that, because the hangers-on of courts are made to interlard their speech with such quips and quiddities, similar conceits should not be thought out of place in the language of the camp. Thirdly, up to this time, Iago has *not* had occasion to repress the ardour of Roderigo, but, on the contrary, both in this very scene, and in all their conversations hitherto, has been stimulating and encouraging him to prosecute his suit with zeal and confidence ; it is only subsequently that the dupe becomes impatient from a suspicion that he has been fooled. Fourthly, the use of the word *stand* in the sense of *await patiently*, is without precedent in the plays of Shakspeare, or elsewhere, so far as we can discover. The nearest approach to this signification is where the word is used for *to withstand*, *to confront*, as in *Cymbeline*,—" The villain would not stand me ;" and in *Richard III.*,—" I will stand the hazard of the die." But this usage cannot justify such phrases as *I stand his arrival*, or, *I stand your convenience*, in the sense of awaiting. Fifthly, the reading of the folio admits of an easy explanation, and change is, therefore, unnecessary. We would interpret the passage thus, retaining the reading *trace* : " If this worthless Venetian whom I follow and watch to urge him

to keenness in the pursuit, will but *bear* the instigation without shrinking or recoiling, I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip." The verb *to trace* is repeatedly found in Shakspeare with the meaning, *to follow closely*; and in *I. Henry IV.*, we have it used, as here, of following a person:—

And bring him out, that is but woman's son
Can trace me in the tedious ways of art,
And hold me pace in deep experiments.—iii. 1.

In *Antony and Cleopatra* we find an authority for *to stand*, in the sense *to bear or endure*—

To reel the streets at noon, and stand the buffet
With knaves that snell of sweat.—i. 4.

In the fifth line of the passage we are discussing, we think that the reading of the folio,

Abuse him to the Moor in the right garb,

admits of a satisfactory explanation, when considered in connection with the following line,

For I fear Cassio with my, &c.

Iago was accusing Cassio falsely, yet in the right garb or character, for, even though innocent as far as the Moor was concerned, he was probably guilty as against Iago of the very kind of offence of which he was accused.

Now my sick fool Roderigo,
Whom love has turned almost the wrong side out,
To Desdemona hath to-night caroused
Potations pottle-deep; and he's to watch:
Three else of Cyprus,—noble swelling spirits
That hold their honours in a wary distance—
The very elements of this warlike isle,
Have I to-night flustered with flowing cups
And they watch too.—ii. 3.

The quarto reads "Three lads of Cyprus," which is intolerable. The passage, as found in the folio, seems to us so simple that we should not offer any remarks on it, but that many commentators appear to have thought it unintelligible. Malone and Steevens prefer the reading *lads*. Singer and Collier think *else* undoubtedly corrupt, and the latter adopts into his text the MS. corrector's emendation, "Three elfs of Cyprus"—a reading which can hardly be surpassed in whimsicality at least, whatever its other merits or demerits may be. "Roderigo," says Iago, "has caroused deeply, and is to keep watch to-night. Three others" (taking *else* as a pronoun) or "three besides" (taking it as an adverb) "natives of Cyprus, have also been made drunk by me, and are to watch too." If authority for this use of *else* is required, we have in *King John*,—

I bring you witnesses
Twice fifteen thousand hearts of England's breed.
Best. Bastards and else.—ii. 1.

and such phrases as *nothing else, something else*, are common.

Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
And thou by that small hurt hast cashiered Cassio :
Though other things grow fair against the sun,
Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe.—ii. 3.

On this passage Dr. Johnson comments as follows :—"Of many different things, all planned with the same skill, and promoted with the same diligence, some must succeed sooner than others, by the order of nature. Everything cannot be done at once; we must proceed by the necessary gradation. We are not to despair of slow events any more than of tardy fruits, while the causes are in regular progress, and the fruits *grow fair against the sun*. Hamner has not, I think, rightly conceived the sentiment, for he reads,—

Those fruits which blossom first are not first ripe.

I have, therefore, drawn it out at length, for there are few to whom that will be easy which was difficult to Hamner."

Malone remarks that the "blossoming" referred to is the removal of Cassio, and that Dr. Johnson is therefore wrong in thinking the schemes of Iago and Roderigo to be compared to tardy fruits. He does not, however, suggest any explanation as to what those things are which "grow fair against the sun," the only obscurity in the passage. The train of thought is this,—“Though the plans of other men may progress pleasantly and agreeably to themselves, like fruits ripening full in the sunshine; whereas yours have not done so thus far, since you have been beaten by Cassio; yet, on the other hand, your designs have the promise contained in an early blossoming, since you have already succeeded in the first step, namely, in having Cassio cashiered, and the earliest blossom betokens the earliest fruit."

And, for I know thou'rt full of love and honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou givest them breath,
Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more :
For such things in a false disloyal knave
Are tricks of custom, but in a man that's just
They're close dilations, working from the heart
That passion cannot rule.—iii. 3.

In this passage the quarto reads *close denotements*, changed by the editors of the folio into *close dilations*, which is probably the true reading. Dr. Johnson, however, "ingeniously" altered this to *close delations*, on the ground, it would seem, that *dilations*, meaning *full expositions* or *amplifications*, neither agrees with the context nor makes sense; and modern editors have universally adopted the conjectural reading. It appears to us, however, that *dilations* both agrees with the context and makes sense, at least as well as *delations*. Othello complains that Iago, having "shut up in his brain some horrible conceit," the existence of which he betrays at one time by an exclamation, at another by some short phrase of disapproval, pauses without disclosing his entire thought. He is, in fact,

speaking of Iago's evasions, or puts-off—*stops* he has just called them—and this is the exact meaning of *dilations*. Some commentators—and among them, probably, Dr. Johnson—have confounded this word with *dilatations*, which means *amplifications, enlargements*; but the two are totally distinct, the former being derived from the Latin *differre*, in its meaning of “to put off;” the latter from *dilatare*, “to make broad,” “to expand.” We understand Othello to say, “These pauses are but mysterious evasions, to which the prudence and discretion of a heart that passion cannot rule constrain you.” *Dilations* seems even to agree better with the context than the conjectural reading. The *dilation* would naturally be said to spring from a heart which could control rash impulses; the *delation* from one readily moved to passion; but the *close delation*, the mysterious charge, half spoken, half suppressed, from the treacherous and plotting brain of one who, in the words of P. Syrus,

Factum tacendo crimen acrius facit.

This is, no doubt, precisely what Iago desires to do; but Shakspeare did not mean Othello to form so just an estimate of the arch-traitor's character at this stage of the action.

Iago. O beware, my lord, of jealousy.

It is the green-eyed monster, which doth mock

The meat it feeds on.—iii. 3.

We will add but little to the enormous amount of comment which this passage has elicited. The food of jealousy is love, which it mocks, or treats with despite and indignity; for mockery is not always in Shakspeare's language to be understood in a merely playful sense. This view receives support from the similar expression in Act v. 2:—

O mistress, villany hath made mocks with love!

Exchange me for a goat,

When I shall turn the business of my soul

To such exsufficate and blown surmises,

Matching thy inference.—iii. 3.

We think it extremely unlikely that the disputed word, *exsufficate*, is, as commentators say, to be explained by the ecclesiastical term, *exsufflare*, which signified the symbolical blowing out of the breath whereby, in certain religious ceremonies, the renouncing that which was sinful was expressed. The Latin verb *sufflare* means “to puff out, to inflate,” as in *sufflare buccas*, “to puff out the cheeks;” it is, accordingly, the proper word to express the blowing up of bubbles. *Exsufflare* would mean to blow up to a large size; and *exsufflate* surmises would be, in this sense, not only an intelligible, but even a strictly appropriate phrase. Shakspeare, like most other writers of his day, affected words of a Latin aspect and sound, nor was he over particular about perfect accuracy in their formation when there was a gain to be made in respect of rhythm and metrical fulness by neglecting it. On this principle it is that we have, not only the word we are considering, but similar lengthened formations, such as *vastidity* for *vastity*,

impercevant for *imperceivant* or *unperceiving*. We think that *exsufflicate* and *blown* (or *blow'd*) are two epithets of nearly the same signification, joined, for additional weight and force, with a single substantive, after Shakspeare's manner. In this same play we have, for instance, "a capable and wide revenge," "an extravagant and wheeling stranger"—the reading "wheeling" is ludicrous—and similarly in *Hamlet*, "the extravagant and erring spirit;" but the usage is too common to stand in need of illustration. *Exsufflicate* and *blown* surmises are, as a Greek writer might say, ὑπόνοιαι ὑπέρογκοι καὶ ἐκπεφυσμηταί,—empty suspicions blown up like bubbles. We find that this view is supported by the authority of Richardson's *Dictionary*, but we cannot agree that *exsufflicate* is probably an error for *exsufflate*; the metre and the coincidence of texts sufficiently disprove this.

Cassio. 'Prithce, bear some charity to my wit, do not think it so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha.

Othello. So, so, so, so. They laugh that win. (*Aside*.)

Iago. Why, the cry goes that you marry her.

Cassio. 'Prithce say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Othello. Have you scored me? Well. (*Aside*.)—iv. 1.

Johnson explains "Have you scored me?" to signify *Have you made my reckoning? Have you settled the term of my life?* Steevens, remarking that "to score" meant originally *to cut a notch upon a tally*, or, *to indent a form upon any substance*, and citing Spenser to this effect, explains it here as being used figuratively, and meaning to set a brand or mark of disgrace upon a person, as in *Antony and Cleopatra*, "Let us score their backs." Malone is rather of opinion that our poet was thinking of the ignominious punishment of slaves. Singer thinks *scored* the true reading, and *scored* unintelligible. It is quite manifest, however, we think, that *Othello* is referring to—perhaps, indeed, continuing—his last words, "They laugh that win;" and that *score* is used in its common signification of marking the points won towards the game: "You have gained the victory over me, and won the game. Have you scored my defeat?"

Put out the light!

If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me:—but once put out thy light,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume.—v. 2.

This passage seems to have so impressed Shelley's imagination that he has introduced a wonderfully close imitation of it into his magnificent tragedy, the *Cenci*. Indeed, he must have been very deeply imbued in Shakspearian reading at the time when this drama was written, if we may judge from the extraordinary number of plagiarisms, no doubt unintentional, from Shakspeare's plays which are found in it. As attention has never, so far as we are aware, been directed to these by any writer, we venture to point out some of the most remarkable. The passage which

we have cited is thus imitated. At the hour fixed for his father's murder, Giacomo addresses his dying lamp as follows :—

O

Thou unrepented lamp ! whose narrow fire
Is shaken by the wind, and on whose edge
Devouring darkness hovers ! Thou small flame
Which, as a dying pulse rises and falls,
Still flickerest up and down, how very soon,
Did I not feed thee, wouldst thou fail and be
As thou hadst never been ! So wastes and sinks
Even now perhaps the life that kindled mine :
But that no power can fill with vital oil
That broken lamp of flesh.

And afterwards, lighting the lamp,—

And yet once quenched I cannot thus relume
My father's life.—Act iii. 2.

In the third scene of the first act, Conci thus apostrophizes wine which he is drinking :—

Be thou the resolution of quick youth
Within my veins, and manhood's purpose stern,
And age's firm, cold, subtle villany.

Compare with this a passage in *Richard III.* :—

Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy ;
Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious ;
Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous ;
Thy age confirmed, proud, subtle, sly, and bloody.—iv. 4.

Here it is not precisely in the words that we find the resemblance, but there is an unmistakable imitation of the idea. The same remark applies to the resemblance between the following passages :—

Oresino. You cannot say

I urged you to the deed.

Giacomo. O, had I never

Found in thy smooth and ready countenance
The mirror of my darkest thoughts ; hadst thou
Never with hints and questions made me look
Upon the monster of my thoughts, until it grew
Familiar to desire—*Cenci*, v. 1.

and—

How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds
Makes ill deeds done ! Hadst thou not been by,
A fellow by the hand of nature marked,
Quoted, and signed to do a deed of shame,
This murder had not come into my mind :
But taking note of thy abhorred aspect,
Finding thee fit for bloody villany,
Apt, hable to be employed in danger,
I faintly broke with thee of Arthur's death.—*King John*, iv. 2.

Sometimes we have, in part, the exact words of the passage in Shakspeare

which had impressed the modern poet's mind ; for instance, Beatrice exclaims,—

Ay, something must be done,
What yet I know not,—something which shall make
The thing that I have suffered but a shadow
In the dread lightning which avenges it.—*Cenci*, iii. 1.

Who is not reminded of Lear's burst of passion ?—

I will do such things—
What they are yet I know not, but they shall be
The terrors of the earth.—*Lear*, ii. 4.

In another part of the play we find Beatrice saying,—

How fearful ! To be nothing ! Or to be
What ? O where am I ? Let me not go mad !
Sweet Heaven, forgive weak thoughts.—*Cenci*, v. 4.

Similarly, Lear exclaims,—

O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet Heaven !

The coincidence here is both curious and remarkable, on account of the words " sweet Heaven " being in the modern play joined with the sentence following the prayer against madness, while in *Lear* they form part of the prayer. Evidently the flow and cadence had unconsciously lingered in Shelley's ear, and so the words were reproduced by him in their sequence, though disunited in their sense. Earlier in the same speech Beatrice, expressing her shuddering repugnance at the idea of approaching death, says,—

My God ! can it be possible I have
To die so suddenly ? So young to go
Under the obscure, cold, rotting wormy ground !

Compare with this Claudio's words, on a similar occasion, in *Measure for Measure* :—

Ay, but to die and go we know not where,
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot.—iii. 1.

In an earlier scene in the *Cenci* a song is introduced by these lines,—

Come, I will sing you some low sleepy tune,
Not cheerful nor yet sad ; some dull old thing,
Some outworn and unused monotony,
Such as our country goosips sing and spin
Till they almost forget they live.

Who is not gladly reminded of the prelude to the song, " Come away, death," in *Twelfth Night*, so inimitable in its exquisite simplicity and dainty blending of sweetness with melancholy ?

O fellow, come, the song we had last night :—
Mark it, Cesario ; it is old and plain ;
The spinsters, and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids, that weave their thread with bones,
Do use to chaunt it : it is silly sooth,
And dallies with the innocence of love,
Like the old age.—ii. 4.

We have called these unconscious plagiarisms, and such we have no doubt they were. It is, indeed, scarcely possible that any one should knowingly venture to imitate, in so undisguised a manner, and so frequently in the same piece, a poet who is in every one's hands; and even some of that poet's most familiar passages. Shelley has himself stated that the only intentional plagiarism in the whole play is from an idea in Calderon's *Purgatorio del San Patricio*, which is introduced into Beatrice's description of the chasm appointed for her father's murder; and no one who considers the absolute truthfulness of Shelley's nature can doubt that he wrote this in good faith. Indeed, the statement will be easily believed by any one who has given his attention to this subject of unconscious plagiarism, so curiously close sometimes are imitations of favourite authors by writers who have evidently made them without any "guilty knowledge." We have said so much on the subject already, that we shall content ourselves with citing one more instance, taken from the works of the present poet laureate; at which, if his attention has ever been directed to it, we are convinced that no one has felt more surprise than the author himself. In the well-known Swallow song, one of the most admired stanzas is,—

O were I thou that she might take me in
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

This certainly bears a remarkably close resemblance to an exquisite stanza in *Venus and Adonis* :—

Here was thy father's bed, here in my breast;
Thou art the next of blood, and 'tis thy right:
Lo! in this hollow cradle take thy rest,
My throbbing heart shall rock thee day and night:
There shall not be one minute in an hour,
Wherein I will not kiss my sweet love's flower.

Are there no stones in heaven
But what serve for the thunder?—v. 2.

This passage means, as Malone explains, "Are there no missiles in heaven but those which are used for the thunder? Has heaven not one superfluous bolt to cast at this wretch?" Steevens is certainly wrong in understanding the question to be, "Are there no minor degrees of punishment more suited to the offences of mortals than the thunder?" It may, perhaps, be thought that the word *stones* was suggested by Juvenal's—

saxa decrum
Hæc et tela putant,

which would support the view taken by Steevens, as the Roman poet is speaking of diseases and such visitations as being the *stones* or missiles of the Gods; but the expression *thunder-stones* is found elsewhere in Shakspeare as an equivalent for *thunder-bolt*. For instance, in *Cymbeline*, iv. 2,—

Fear no more the lightning flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;—

and in *Henry V.* i. 2, we find the bullets discharged from guns called *gunstones*. This last word probably points out the origin of the phrase.

Then shall you speak
Of one that loved, not wisely, but too well ;
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought,
Perplexed in the extreme ; of one whose hand,
Like the base Indian, throw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe.—v. 2.

The commentators have been so fully occupied by the controversy whether *Indian* or *Judean* be the true reading, that no attention has been given to another difficulty. Assuming, as we do, that *Indian* is undoubtedly right, how are we to explain, *richer than all his tribe* ? The received interpretation, that the pearl was worth more than the wealth of all the Indian's kindred does not seem satisfactory. In the first place, it requires us to suppose an inelegant ambiguity, and even impropriety, in the employment of the single adjective *rich* with two entirely different meanings. A *pearl* is said to be *rich* in the sense that it is *valuable*, or *precious* ; a *tribe*,^h in the sense that it is *wealthy*. The sentence would then, in this way of viewing it, be an awkward and confused mode of saying "a pearl, the value of which was greater than the wealth of all the Indian's tribe." In the next place, it is not clear why the wealth of this base (that is, uncivilized or savage) Indian's tribe should be fixed on as an appropriate measure of value, while he himself was so ignorant of what was valuable as to throw away so precious a pearl. These difficulties are removed by a very simple explanation. The word *his* does not, in our opinion, refer to the Indian, but is the genitive of the neuter pronoun, and *tribe* is, by an ordinary poetic licence, used for kindred or kind. Thus the pearl is said to be richer than all *its* kind,—more precious than all other pearls. In this way we have an apt comparison for Desdemona, who, now that the Moor was convinced of her innocence, was to him peerless amongst women. It is scarcely necessary to remark that *his*, the original genitive of *it*, was continually used in Shakspeare's time, and even much later, instead of its more modern substitute. Let one instance out of many suffice :—

Hearing you praised, I say 'tis so, 'tis true,
And to the most of praise add something more ;
But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.

Shakspeare Sonnet, 85.

Whether Shakspeare meant to make Othello a veritable negro, is a question which has been warmly discussed. In America feeling has run so high on the subject that the noble Moor has even been personated there by an actor who appeared with a white face. Very possibly the indignation of a negro-hating audience might have rendered a black one dangerous to its bearer. In this less excitable country, though we have never gone to so extreme a length, yet in the make-up of actors a considerable diversity of opinion has been manifest as to the precise degree of

blackness in which the royal Moor should be presented to the British public. All varieties of shade have from time to time found favour, from the most uncompromising jet to the very faintest hue of brown by which "the shadowed livery of the burnished sun" can be represented.

The strict Shakspearian has generally been disposed to insist on the full measure of blackness, but the weaker crowd have never heartily favoured the idea of a union between the beautiful Italian and one whose complexion seems to them inconsistent with sentiment though not "incompatible with freedom." Negro patriots, negro lecturers, negro philanthropists, not to speak of Christy minstrels, are well enough; even a negro bishop may be regarded as not unbecoming the lawn; but, sooth to say, a negro Othello need never expect more than a hollow and doubtful popularity in this country. Coleridge in his Shakspearian lectures not only combats the necessity of holding the negro doctrine, but emphatically enumerates amongst his reasons this feeling of repugnance. He argues that Othello is not a negro, because he "fetches his life and being from men of royal siege," and this at a time when negroes were only known as slaves; secondly he insists that Roderigo's words

What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,

must only be regarded as the malicious exaggeration of a rival, who affects to confound Moors and negroes. Finally he urges that it would argue a disproportionateness, a want of balance in Desdemona that she should love a negro, which Shakspeare does not appear to have in the least contemplated. This last reason, meaning in reality nothing more than repugnance to the idea of Desdemona's love being a negro, is plainly the true one, without which we should never have had the question raised.

Notwithstanding the authority of Coleridge, strenuously supported as he is by Mr. Charles Knight, there can be little doubt that Shakspeare meant his Moor to be a negro both in colour and features. In the first place, we have in the play itself a series of passages which, taken separately, may perhaps be more or less successfully explained away, but taken together form an overwhelming mass of proof. To begin with, there are Roderigo's words, which Coleridge cites,

What a full fortune does the thick lips owe;

and which we think cannot be explained away as a rival's exaggeration, for a reason which we shall presently mention. Subsequently, he is termed by Iago an "old black ram." Brabantio's first idea, on finding that his daughter has eloped with the Moor, is that she must have been wrought to do so by sorcery; and he explains his reason for this:—

I'll refer me to all things of sense
(If she in chains of magic were not bound),
Whether a maid so tender, fair, and happy,
So opposite to marriage that she shunned

The wealthy, curled, darlings of our nation,
 Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
 Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
 Of such a thing as thou,—to fear, not to delight.

Again, before the Duke and Senate, he urges the same charge on the same grounds :—

She is abused, stolen from me, and corrupted
 By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks :
 For nature so preposterously to err,
 Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
 Sans witchcraft could not.

Making every allowance for the grief and anger of a father whose daughter has fled with a lover displeasing to him, these words, gravely urged before the highest judicial body, and gravely listened to and entertained by them, are not applicable to one who differed merely in shade of complexion, but not materially in features, from the inhabitants of the country. Desdemona herself, when accounting for her loving the Moor, has nothing to say in favour of his personal appearance. Her sole reference to what is alleged against him on that ground simply abandons the point as not susceptible of argument. She can only say :—

I saw Othello's visage in his mind.

Iago, when encouraging Roderigo to persevere in his suit to Desdemona, argues that her affections cannot be constant to her lord, for, says he, "Her eye must be fed, and what delight shall she have to look on the Devil?" Even when conversing with Othello himself, he does not hesitate to dwell on the Moor's ill favour as a matter patent to all, and undeniable :—

As, to be bold with you,
 Not to affect many proposed matches
 Of her own clime, complexion, and degree ;
 —Foh ! one may smell in such a will most rank,
 Foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural,—
 I may fear,
 Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
 May fall to match you with her country forms,
 And, happily, repent.

It would almost seem as if this passage had suggested to Coleridge his assertion that Shakspeare does not appear to have in the least contemplated a *disproportionateness*, a want of balance, in Desdemona, such as love for a negro would imply. It certainly does not bear him out in this view, but even seems strongly opposed to it. Iago, though a liar in grain, is far too skilful to build his insidious reasonings and suggested conclusions on premisses which are not at least plausible.

But let us hear Othello's own testimony on this matter :—

If I do prove her haggard,
 Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
 I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
 To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black,
 And have not those soft parts of conversation
 That chamberers have

and afterwards :—

My name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black
As mine own face.

In the next place, not in this play only, but wherever Shakspeare mentions Moors, he invariably speaks of them as negroes. In the *Merchant of Venice*, Portia says of the Prince of Morocco—another Moor of “royal siego”—“If he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.” In another passage of the same play, Act iii. 5, *negro* and *Moor* are actually used as convertible terms. There can be no doubt that in *Titus Andronicus*, Aaron the Moor is meant to be a negro. He is “a coal-black Moor.” A fly is described as—

A black ill-favoured fly,
Like to the empress' Moor.

His child is—

A joyless, dismal, black, and sorrowful issue.
——a babe as loathsome as a toad,

and is called by its father “a thick-lipped slave;” whence we may conclude that the similar epithet applied to Othello is not meant for a malicious exaggeration, as Coleridge maintains, but as a description supposed to be applicable to all persons of Moorish race. It is of no consequence as to this question, whether we consider *Titus Andronicus* a genuine play of Shakspeare's or not. It is sufficient for our purpose to show that in Shakspeare's time a Moor was popularly understood to be “a negro,” a “black-a-moor”—the precise interpretation of the word which is found in so late a work as Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary*.

Finally, the uncomeliness of Othello's visage is essential to the probability of the plot. For the utter overthrow of that “constant, loving, noble nature,” not only an appearance of the most complete and overwhelming proof is necessary, but it is also requisite that his mind should be predisposed to receive this apparent evidence without suspecting that it may be forged or illusory. This preparation is effected, and the improbability, which would otherwise be a blemish on the plot, guarded against by Iago's insidiously urging on him two considerations: first, that Desdemona, having deceived her father, might be not incapable of deceiving her husband; and, secondly, that his unlovely exterior was ill calculated to fix her affections permanently, and that her very preference of such a lover to her other suitors showed a rank will and disproportionate mind. Of Shakspeare's care, as well as consummate art, in providing that the development of his plots shall not be wanting in probability, we have a remarkable instance in this very case. The first seed of suspicion is sown in Othello's mind long before the fatal complication and catastrophe can be foreseen or even conjectured by the reader or spectator. At the very time when Desdemona has declared openly her entire devotion, when

Othello's confidence in her faith and affection are unbounded, her father, utters this warning:—

Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see ;
She has deceived her father, and may thee.

The words, for the moment, pass almost unheeded, but in time they take root and yield a deadly harvest.

Schlegel goes so far as to hold that Shakspeare meant not only to invest Othello with the personal attributes, but also to endow him with the moral characteristics of a negro. "What a fortunate mistake," he remarks, "that the Moor—under which name in the original novel a baptized Saracen of the northern coast of Africa was unquestionably meant—has been made by Shakspeare in every respect a negro! We recognise in Othello the wild nature of that glowing zone which generates the most ravenous beasts of prey and the most deadly poisons, tamed only in appearance by the desire of fame, by foreign laws of honour, and by nobler and milder manners. His jealousy is not the jealousy of the heart, which is compatible with the tenderest feeling and adoration of the beloved object; it is of that sensual kind which, in burning climes, has given birth to the disgraceful confinement of women, and many other unnatural usages. A drop of this poison flows in his veins, and sets his whole blood in the wildest ferment. The Moor seems frank, confiding, grateful for the love shown him; and he is all this, and moreover a hero who spurns at danger, a worthy leader of an army, a faithful servant of the state; but the mere physical force of passion puts to flight in one moment all his acquired and mere habitual virtues, and gives the upper hand to the savage over the moral man." We cannot, however, believe that the poet had any intention of assimilating his hero morally to even so highly ideal a negro as the eminent critic has evolved from the depths of his consciousness. In Cinthio's tale Shakspeare found a Moor, which to the English ear meant negro, and accordingly the hero of the drama founded on that story is externally a negro. Little or nothing, however, was popularly known in Shakspeare's day as to the negro being unlike the European in his moral and intellectual constitution, and therefore in his moral and intellectual constitution Othello is a European. In this "loving, constant, noble nature," wise and moderate in rule, calm and fearless in danger, "not easily jealous, but being wrought, perplexed in the extreme," we can see nothing which is distinctively negro. Even assuming that the ideal negro may possess all these qualities, yet surely not even Exeter Hall will deny that the ideal European may claim to possess them in an equal degree.

Besides the repugnance, more generally felt than expressed, to a negro being the hero of a love story, there is at the present day another cause why *Othello*, as an acting play, can hardly be popular with persons of cultivated taste; namely, the coarse impersonation of the principal character now adopted on the stage. Scarcely any one who in the solitude of his study has conjured up airy tongues and shadowy forms, and beheld this terrible drama enacted by the creatures of his phantasy, can endure

patiently the shock which his illusions receive, when he expects his ideal to be realised in the theatre. As a reader, he had found in Othello a grave dignity and a grandeur of bearing, broken occasionally by bursts of tragic passion : as a spectator he witnesses a strange and far from dignified combination of hysterical cries and epileptic convulsions ; as if the malady invented by Iago was not only real but incessant, from the first moment in which the seeds of suspicion have been sown. It is plain that Shakspeare did not intend the Moor to shake and rave in the extraordinary manner which is now familiar to us, either before or during the scene in which he taxes Desdemona with no longer possessing the fatal handkerchief. Indeed, his perturbation on that occasion is ascribed by Iago to State matters of moment,—an explanation which neither Desdemona nor her companion Emilia regards as improbable or inadequate. So extravagant, however, is the reading of the part now in vogue that the utter and ludicrous insufficiency of the cause suggested has necessarily the effect of drawing a laugh from the audience, who not unnaturally regard it as a touch of comic humour. In the fourth act, no doubt, the expression of passion must be so intense as to tax severely the actor's powers ; but the spasms and contortions of physical disease can never be properly substituted for the signs of mental emotion.

With respect to the manner in which the catastrophe is wrought out, *Othello*—as in even a greater degree one other drama of Shakspeare's—is akin to the purest Attic, rather than to the Romance school of tragedy. In the latter the tragic event is brought about by the ungovernable passions of men—by a tyrant's rage, by blind revenge, by unbridled ambition, or by such ordinary human motives or human sins. In the Grecian drama it is otherwise. Here the bravest and most noble of the human race are brought forward to teach the stern doctrine that courage, virtue, wisdom, all that can raise the best of men above their kind, are weak and bootless to resist the will of fate and force of circumstance. Sin is not voluntary, nor misfortune to be shunned ; but men walk blindfold on the verge of an awful precipice, into which a single darkling step may plunge them. The only signs to which they can look to guide their way are themselves delusive ; oracular intimations of the will of heaven—terrible, mysterious, and never rightly understood till too late ; so that those mortals who are weak or pious enough to take them for guides invariably rush into the destruction which they sought to avoid. On this stage the world and its contents are but

A chaos of mishaps,
In which, as in a glass, we plainly see
That all man's life is but a tragedy.

There are, it is true, brighter spots in the picture—calamities steadfastly, heroically borne, soul-stirring sentiments which strike the noblest chords of our nature, glorious songs of piety, patriotism, and liberty ; but the impression of the whole is stern and depressing ; it is the awful drama of irresistible doom and helpless man.

So in the character of Othello we find constancy and courage, wisdom and self-control. By his noble and heroic qualities he has arrived at the pinnacle of honour and happiness; but at the very moment of his reaching this height a gloomy presentiment prepares us for a coming and disastrous change.

If it were now to die,
he says, at the instant of his most perfect happiness and highest earthly fortune,

"Twere now to be most happy; for I fear
My soul hath her content so absolute,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

From this moment, indeed, the web of destiny begins to close around him. We cannot see that the cause of his approaching ruin is within his own hands; it is rather the Nemesis which dogs excessive prosperity that drives him onward blindfold and unable to resist. On the English stage, such an influence as this, if treated abstractedly, would be unintelligible; and, accordingly, we have it embodied in *Iago*, who, in his unrelenting and all but motiveless malignity, is more akin to the working of implacable doom than to humanity. By his agency incidents are so arranged or contrived, or they are so coloured by his horribly subtle suggestions, that even such a wise and noble nature as that of the Moor is crushed without a possibility of escape. He recognises himself that it is destiny which has destroyed him body and soul; at the very moment of his despair his tone and words are those of a fatalist who resigns himself calmly to the inevitable:—

O vain boast!
Who can control his fate?

Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.

Indeed, without this mitigation of his crime, and the compassion for his supreme unhappiness produced by it, the repugnance of both reader and spectator at so shocking an act as the murder of Desdemona would be unendurable, and the poet would violate a rule which all true artists observe in dealing with the horrible. Even with it, the surpassing power of this most tragic of tragedies carries our emotions to the utmost degree of intensity of which art allows. The pity which it excites is not of the melting but of the painful and shuddering kind;—its pathos is the very pathos of horror. "No eloquence," says Schlegel, "could paint the overwhelming force of the catastrophe in *Othello*,—the pressure of feelings which measure out in a moment the abysses of eternity."

Summer in the Hardanger Province.

AMONG the quiet villages, which cluster round the upper waters of the Hardanger Fjord, the peasants retain their old manners, dialect, and costume more faithfully, perhaps, than in any other province of Norway. The traveller is impressed at once by the splendour of the landscape and the strangeness of the antique modes of life which linger in these secluded valleys. We shall endeavour to describe the chief features of the province, and the incidents which most impressed us during a stay of several weeks in this district; and we hope that others may be induced to follow in the footsteps of our party, or rather in the track of our boat, since in the district which we are describing they will hardly find ten miles of high road to a hundred miles of water. The Hardanger Fjord, a great arm of the sea, or long water-valley, runs inland for a hundred and twenty miles towards the bleak deserts and wild valleys of Thelmark. Something might be said of the winding strait and the precipitous islands at its mouth, of the reef of rocks where we saw five sea-eagles at once sailing round in the air and dashing at whiles into the spray, or of the walls of verdure and the level breaks of meadow which here and there interrupt the monotonous succession of stony precipices. But a more striking view is opened after leaving the narrow entrance: the fjord opens out before us, and the vast white domes of the Folgefond are seen glittering in the sunshine. This huge snow-field, which is about as large as the county of Middlesex, is supported by bold black mountains, which form the buttresses to its cupola.

Between the mountains and the sea lies, in most places, a belt of fertile land, dotted with farmhouses, painted pink or yellow, after the quaint Norwegian fashion. The only house which possesses any historical interest is the castle or manor-house of Rosendal, where Bothwell lived in exile, finding in "the storm-haunted Hardanger" a fitting resting place for his bold and turbulent spirit. The barons of Rosendal were at one time powerful nobles. Their order long ago declined, and is now extinct, but the peasants still remember stories of the pride and poverty of the last of the race of Rosendal. Some miles beyond lies the entrance to the Moranger Fjord, opposite to a well-wooded island in the centre of the main waters; the inlet leads to a narrow valley which, in the words of Professor Forbes, is "closed in by the gleaming coronet of the perpetual snow-fields of the Folgefond." Passing a promontory called Thorsnes, or the Cape of Thor, the site of a temple in old times, we come to the broadest part of the fjord, where directly opposite to the last precipices of the Folgefond lies the pretty village of Noreimsund. It is built upon the margin of a

shallow bay, in which the rocks and the drooping rowan-trees with their clusters of scarlet berries are reflected on all sides. From the mouth of the bay is seen at once the whole range of the snow-fields, and the blue ice-plains of the Halling Jökul, rising miles away above the furthest recesses of the fjord—

Les champs couverts de neige éclairés par l'Aurore,
Et les flots de cristal que le soleil colore,
Et les jökuls brillants avec leur ciel d'azur.

Icelandic travellers will remember that a *jökul* signifies the plain of ice which spreads across the plateau of a high flat-topped mountain. It is one of many words from the old language which has lingered in this district. Noreimsund, among its other attractions, possesses a waterfall, of which the natives have but a small opinion, but which is eagerly visited by many English tourists. It owes its celebrity to some mistake, as yet not clearly explained. The guide-books describe with rapture its sheer fall of seven hundred feet, and its grotto in which the traveller may safely stand between the water and the rock from which it falls, stunned by the never-ending roar, and dazzled by the prismatic light which flashes through the falling sheet of crystal. But the "magnificent Ostud-foss" is, in reality, a source of bitter disappointment to the majority of its visitors. Though there is a large body of water, the height of the fall is more like seventy than seven hundred feet, and one authority has limited it to forty feet of perpendicular descent. It is probable that the first agent for the guide-books who described its beauty was in too great a hurry to visit the spot, and trusted to the account of an imaginative peasant, or it may be that in writing up his diary an accidental cipher multiplied the true height by ten; it is rather curious that the mistake should never have been corrected, and that almost all the authors who describe the Hardanger fjord should have scrupulously perpetuated the delusion.

It would be a task without an end to describe the grandeur of the upper portions of the Hardanger. Here, as at Ullensvang, a green and fertile promontory juts out into the sea: there the desolate mountain-ranges rise abruptly from the waves with hardly a break in their cliffs for miles. In one of the finest situations lies the farm of Utne, where the kindest of peasant hostesses is always ready to welcome a party of English, and to smile at their praises of her daughter Thorbjorn, the *belle* of all the waterside. The house stands at the foot of a green Alp which overlooks the narrow reach of water by which the lowest of the glaciers and the cataracts of Skjeggedal are approached. From the slopes behind the house we could trace the main stream of the fjord for many miles, and above the cliffs could here and there catch glimpses of domes and peaks of snow. Some, as fortunate as ourselves, may note from the old lindens on the natural terrace the delicacy of the mountain forms in the transparent summer nights; or, later in the year, watch the alternate rays and

shadows of the Aurora darting across the sky. As they admire the restless meteoric motion, they will understand the meaning of the ballad-singers who gave the name of the Merry Dancers to the flickering Northern Lights.

At the end of the fjord a green bank stretches from cliff to cliff. It does not require much learning to know that this is the *moraine* of an extinct glacier, which has left its marks upon the steep rocks that surround the lake separated by this bank from the sea. Behind this lake, and in the glens which divide its mountains, we counted at least ten other *moraines*, two of which half block the two black gorges leading to the fells of Halling and Thelemark. Upon this lake, while rowing beneath a serrated ridge which they call the Devil's Teeth, we saw one morning a most picturesque procession. A water-funeral was slowly moving up to the head of the lake, four boats filled with peasants being led by a barge, which contained a shrouded coffin, and in the bow a tall black cross held aloft. The delicate outline of the cross, raised in the air and reflected in the water, met our eyes at the moment when the peasants raised their shrill and monotonous dirge. As the sound came across the lake our rowers stopped to listen. "'Tis the lych-folk singing," they said, and in another minute were chattering over their birchen butter-boxes, glad of the opportunity for taking their morning meal. Soon they were again volunteering their songs, that we might hear the music echo in the hills, and striking up the chorus to their favourite, "Boer Jeg,"—"I live on the lofty fell." In the distance we could still catch some faint sound of the dirge; and their Old-English name for the mourners reminded us of the "lych-song" of our own Northern counties, the strangest of all attempts to describe the journey to the other world, "over the Bridge of Dread and across the Moor of Thorns." "When any dieth," says the Yorkshire chronicler, "certaine women sing a song to the dead bodie, rocytyng the journey that he must goe: and they are of belief, such is their fondnesse, that once in their lives it is good to give a pair of new shoes to a poore man, forasmuch as after this life they are to pass barefoote through a great launde full of thornes and furzen, except by the meryte of the almos aforesaid they have redeemed the forfeyte."

A short foaming river connects the lake with the fjord, on one bank of which rises a stony hill, which the villagers call Wind-shoulder, from the noise of the winter storms which whistle in its chinks and crannies. Behind the hill is the entrance to Simedal, a narrow recess in which the last waters of the Hardanger wind between enormous mountains. The giant Onin guards the entrance; but his snow-fields are hidden from travellers below, who can see no more than beetling cliffs, long cataracts, and, in one place very far up among the pines, a green lawn and tiny huts. The road to this aerial farm leads up long ladders of logs and pine-trunks, clamped into the sides of a cleft formed by the waterfall. At the end of the gorge is a green, rank meadow, through which run two streams born in the glaciers over our heads; behind it rises the dark wall of rock in

terrace upon terrace, with water glistening between the pines, then bare rocks again, and above all the bright ice of the Jökul. There was plenty of life in Simedal. So many shoals of young sea-fish came in, that the fjord was a favourite haunt of seals. Soft dog-like eyes and almost human faces would peer up through the water, or at a little distance from the boat the bearded seal would toss his head out of a wave with a shining sea-trout in his mouth. We were often visited by shoals of porpoises, and were never without our flocks of sea-birds, which breed on these cliffs in spring-time. Saddle-backs and the rare ivory-gulls skimmed by, loons dived and screamed, and the eider-ducks floated placidly about; at low tide the little shore-birds crept about upon the seaweeds in company with the lessers, auks, or a set of shrill chattering terns, from our "tern-stone" in the river. In the early morning the beauty of the place was marvellous. The dark cliffs contrast finely with the pale green tide slowly moving in or out. But an artist might find occupation in Simedal on stormy days as well as in the sunshine: then sudden storms rush down from combs between the mountains and change the colour of the fjord, or mists creep up the cliff and part suddenly again to show their stony peaks. But the finest atmospheric effects are seen there in the summer nights. Once, especially, we remember rowing up Simedal when the sky was full of the August shooting-stars, with now and then a meteor of keener brightness. The edges of the cliffs were all silvered by the moonshine, and on the northern horizon we saw that flickering pallor, which is not the Aurora, but presages its coming. We drifted along with a sense of dreamy enjoyment, until a fish leaped or some wild bird screamed, and the spell of silence was broken. At other times we spent whole days there in fishing, sketching, or listening to the songs and scraps of legend which our boatmen were never tired of repeating. One of them was somewhat of a scholar, and had read much of the Heimskringla; he would discourse to us of the old gods and the old pirates till one might almost have expected the cliff to echo once more to the harp of Thiodolf, or the hoarse war-trumpets of the Viking, whose monstrous tumult was raised not far from our village church. The men were fond of telling us stories about the genii and familiar sprites, in which they more than half believed, and especially of the Neckar, or river-spirit, who was so fond of staying to chat with the man at the water-wheel. At other times they would regale us with stories of "sea-worms," and a prodigious serpent living in a lake "somewhere in Thulemark," and other monsters of which the world has already heard too much. One story, of a mysterious flat-fish called Brigda, was new to us, and may perhaps be worth repeating. The oldest of the fishermen declared that in his grandfather's time the cove was frequently visited by this monster, which was flat and covered with coarse hair or bristles. About fifty years ago it got among the herring-nets, and was finally destroyed by the force of the whole village, which was enriched with many barrels of oil from its liver and blubber. But since the day when the fish (probably a basking-shark) was slain, not a herring has ever visited this part of the fjord again.

All-visitors to the Hardanger who love the picturesque will be pleased at the brilliancy and the variety of the costumes. Every valley, and almost every village, has its distinguishing dress, to which the peasants cling with almost a superstitious tenacity; our servants frequently expressed their great surprise that the same dress should in England be worn by the inhabitants of "different valleys;" and could hardly believe that the ladies of our party were close relations, and yet could wear dresses of a different cut and fashion. It seems, too, as if there were something half repulsive to their minds in the idea that unmarried girls should wear the same kind of bonnet as a married woman. Among the peasants the cap is one of the chief glories of matronhood; and the maiden must bind her hair with the snood, or cover it with a simple kerchief. The linen caps are the most striking articles of the costume. They are spread on frames and boards, twisted into horns, rolled into turbans, and adorned with every possible combination of frills, gophoring, and mysteries of fine needlework, according to the antique fashions of the various communities. Some resemble the high caps of the Normandy country-folk, which have never changed their shape since the days of Hrolf the Ganger; others brought to our minds the quaintly-curved "faldur" or head-dress which is worn on grand occasions by the ladies of Iceland. At one village near Rosendal we were received by an old lady in green bodice with scarlet sleeves, scarlet stockings, and bright blue skirt and hanging belt. At another place a pretty farmeress was making hay among the labourers in a skirt of white linen, with a bodice of scarlet and belt of apple-green, her face being shaded from the sun by the high starched cap, as large as a parasol. Of course these fine clothes are not usually worn on work-a-days by the poorer villagers; but the sight on a Sunday morning was something to be admired. The churchyard was filled with the silk-aproned women in their brightest and best, chatting with hymn-book and handkerchief in hand with the men, who looked a little shy in their miniature coats, silver brooches, and embroidered pantaloons.

Long before the hour for prayers, the water had been dotted with boats decked out in boughs and flags, the rector's four-oar being distinguished by an extra profusion of bunting. The population of our village was very small; but the country-people rowed in from the distant hamlets and farms to our waterside church, where, once a month, in cassock and prodigious ruff, the rector conducted a long and monotonous service. Though said to date from the thirteenth century, the church did not contain much that was antique or interesting beyond an inscription in the later or monkish Runic, and a queer painting of the founder, a holy woman named Rikaragna, who dedicated the spot to her patron St. James. On another occasion we were fortunate enough to witness an old-fashioned wedding or *bryllup*: the word signifies the race for the bride, and alludes to the custom of marriage by capture which has been shown to have prevailed in ancient times among all the savage nations in the world. The traces of the same custom have survived in

the "Welsh weddings" of our own country, and in the ceremony of stealing the bride which prevails, or not long ago prevailed, at weddings in the country districts of the Border. "A wedding cortège in Sweden," says Mr. Maclellan, "was long after the introduction of Christianity a party of armed men, and for greater security marriages were generally performed at night. A pile of lances is said to be still preserved in the old church at Husaby in Gothland, into which were fitted torches; those weapons were borne by the groomsmen, and served the double purpose of giving light and protection." In those turbulent times every church had a rack in the porch for holding the axes and spears of the congregation, so that the lances of Husaby may not have had any special or symbolical reference to the theory of marriage by capture; but we thought that we could trace the influence of the tradition in the wedding which we attended, where the shouts and excited rushings, with the firing of guns and pistols, raised all the din and confusion of a real battle for the bride. The bride's father sat outside the house among the elders of the village with a silver spigot in his hand. Ale was served from the barrel at his side into a massive peg-tankard, inscribed with verses in the Hardanger dialect; and the bride herself, smiling through her tears, handed the stronger drinks in finely-embossed cups to all who wished to drink "Skaal" and long life to her. At last the time came for the service in a church across the water. The bridegroom no longer dangled his bonnet, but helped to push off the boats; the flags waved, the bride was embraced, and amid a parting salute from all our artillery at once, the wedding cortège departed. We had been permitted in the morning, whilst the bride's hair was being plaited in thick coils of a shape fit to receive her crown, to inspect her ornaments, which had been heirlooms in the family for several generations. The most valuable of course was the crown, silver-gilt and adorned with garnets, which was of a more massive pattern than those which we had seen in the Bergen shops; it differed from them, moreover, in being hung with gilt pendants, beads, and tufts of coloured wool. A fine breastplate, filigreed brooches, and a silver marriage-belt, complete the list of her principal adornments. The following description of the belt of a rich lady in Iceland applies exactly to that of the Hardanger bride: "The petticoat is fastened by means of a girdle nearly five feet in length, composed of a number of oblong pieces of silver about an inch and a half long and one inch wide, sowed with their extremities close together upon a piece of green velvet, so that it forms a number of joints and is easily bent round the body and fastened with a buckle: one end is suffered to hang down in front of the apron and nearly reaches the bottom of it. All the joints are gilt and beautifully ornamented with open work and raised knobs of silver." After the wedding a feast commenced which lasted for nearly three days, as far as we could judge by the succession of jaded revellers who returned in scattered boat-loads from the bride's new home across the water. The king of the feast was her father, who boasted afterwards of the strength of mind and body

which had enabled him, like Socrates, to drink down all the boon companions, and return unconquered by the flow of "*Port og Punch og Braende-viin.*" A few nights afterwards we joined a revel of a more pleasing kind, the lads and lasses of the village having been invited to a dance in the kitchen of the chief farm-house. A fiddle and a wooden black-jack of beer completed the simple preparations of the host, and the company were soon merrily engaged in their favourite Sultan Polka, and the Jenny Lind, which here they call the Hamburg Dance. We were much amused at the strangeness of the Halling dance, which was performed with great success by the most agile of the village lads. He marched round the floor with a solemn face to a soft fantastic tune, casting his eyes now and then upon a large nail which had been driven into the centre of the low wooden roof. Then at the right note, as he passed beneath the nail, he turned a sudden somersault, and struck it with his clouted boot, which brought down great applause at each successful repetition of the feat.

We cannot conclude a sketch of this district without saying a few words about the famous waterfall, which is approached by one of the dark ravines at the head of the lake before described. There are other falls of great height and beauty in the neighbouring gorge, and more than one full stream shoots over "the perpendicular escarpments of Simedal;" there is also within a long day's journey the gigantic cataract of Skjeggedal above the Sorfjord which an accomplished traveller has very recently described; but the Vöring-foss remains the wonder of all that country-side. The road winds up to it for several miles between steep cliffs, and by the side of a foaming river, until it is blocked by another cliff, or rather pile of enormous rocks: a zigzag path leads up through ferns and dropping streams, and from the plain above we look down to the lake surrounded with snow-ribbed mountains through the black cleft by which we have ascended. On one side is a precipice over which two brothers, racing on snow-shoes, were dashed one winter into the valley: behind us a flat expanse of moor and marsh, covered with flowers and cloud-berries, divides us from the Jökul and its rocky companions. At some distance a column of white smoke rises from the ground, and this is the reek of the Vöring-foss; on approaching it and looking down we see a good-sized river falling into a deep chasm or cauldron with a mighty roar and vapour. All manner of fine descriptions have been written of it, and one traveller who was here in winter has left a striking account of its beauty when falling through a cave of ice, glittering with huge crystals and enormous icicles. A visitor of more pretentious style has been quoted by Lieutenant Breton:—"All nature stands aghast, the very mountains seem petrified at the sight, and the animals had fled from a wild which may almost be said to *terrify the vegetable creation.*" We will not attempt to rival this magnificent rhapsody, and will only say that the most striking view is to be obtained from the overhanging cliff on the north side of the fall—which cannot, however, be reached without a wearisome journey through quaking

bogs and across muddy streams. The height of the fall has been much exaggerated. The books all agree in estimating the descent at least at 900 feet, and it is not unusual for travellers to maintain that the leap is a thousand feet high. Others have doubted the accuracy of the calculation made by its discoverer, Professor Haustein, and have observed that the visitor's position must cause the proportions of the waterfall to be foreshortened in a very unusual degree, if the common opinion is to be accepted. At the time of one of our visits a party of Norwegian engineers were employed upon a Government survey, and they decided the question for us by stating that the depth of the chasm was under 500 feet. There can, however, be no doubt, that the sheer fall of so large a body of water in long columns and wreaths of foam is one of the most magnificent sights in Europe. After gathering from the edge of the cliff overhanging the Foss a fine plant of the "King of the Mountains," which attains great perfection in this black and oozy soil, we followed the course of the river inland instead of returning to the shore a dozen miles below. As so few travellers go further inland than the waterfall itself, we will close this description of the Hardanger region with a few words about the upper country. The marshland lying between the mountain-tops here forms what is called a "fjeld-dale" or mountain-valley, closed at the end of a few miles by a sudden rise in the ground, and stretching again inland on a higher elevation, until step by step the limit of vegetation is reached, and nothing but stony peaks and muddy hills remain. We were well entertained at a little farm lying in the lower portion of the "fjeld-dale," and surrounded by meadows where "you scarce could see the earth for flowers," and where the wild strawberries and juicy cloud-berries grew all about in wonderful profusion. After coffee and trout, with bowls of fruit and cream, we were shown to the rooms hung with sweet herbs, and stored with heaps of peas, mallows, and other country treasures, where our beds of sweet hay had been prepared. On the loft outside lay a stack of what looked like pasteboard, but which was in truth the household store of "flad-brod" or thin griddle-cakes of oatmeal. We continued next day our course beside the river, through meadows as luxuriant as ever; the forget-me-nots spread in masses on every side, the slender ranunculi or "reindeer-flowers" choose the drier sides of the knolls and hillocks, "and the wild marsh-marigold flames like fire through swamps and hollows gray." Passing some fine cascades at Skurvestol, we entered a well-wooded plain, from which a green hill rises, surmounted by a little farm, the highest in situation of all upon this range of mountains. We turned away with regret from the wonderful view down the valley towards the sea, and round the mountains which encircle the moorland of yesterday's journey, where the broad river divides into two branches. We had to climb down the curved rocks, polished apparently by glacial action, and even the ponies got without a stumble down this formidable "Katzenstieg," the men holding on to their tails, and permitting them to move only inch by inch. Soon after this a cloud of spray was seen issuing from the

ground, and swaying to and fro in the wind. This was a waterfall named Storli-foss, of which we had never seen any description. It falls from a considerable height into a deep chasm, like the Vöring itself; by climbing down to a rock which jutted out in front of the fall, a very good view was attained by one of the party, but as he reascended the loose stones of the cliff-side began to move and carry him down, so that it was not without some trouble and anxiety that at last he was extricated from his dangerous imprisonment. Before evening we reached the higher fells, crossing snow at intervals; here all vegetation ceased, except the lichens, and a dwarfed willow that grows beside the snow. This region is inhabited only by the skulking grey foxes, the wild reindeer—of which, to our great pleasure, we passed a numerous herd—and by the golden plovers, which perch upon the scattered rocks and raise their wailing cry as the traveller passes along the moor. Turning downwards at last, we arrived at the broad pastures of Bjor-dal, where the last huts are built upon the verge of a desert tract which stretches away to the distant Halling-dal. The shallow river sparkled, and the distant snows were illumined in the crimson sunset, as we stood by the low doorway to see the cattle return to the sound of the Alpine horn; and here on the boundary of another province, and out of sight of the waters of the fjord, we shall close the account of our summer ramble in the pleasant regions of Hardanger.

Nettie Finkle.

CHAPTER I.

A YEOMAN'S ESTATE.



O they just go on locking the gates as usual! I can't think what they want to be so very private for," said a disagreeable-looking man, mounted on an exceedingly good horse, as he tried at a gate which led out of the deep hollow lane where he was riding into a neglected grass-grown road. He got down and tried to take it off its hinges, but it was secured at that end also. He uttered an oath, and then, seeming to know the place well, rode on to a field gate which opened on the lane further down, and came back across the pasture to his point.

It was a beautiful bit of ground, lying just where the land fell away in a gentle slope to the valley below; tossed about in every possible direction, with a clear pool at the bottom of the little dell in the heart of it, and with peeps at blue distance from all the higher points. But all was neglected and dilapidated: the fences, like overgrown thickets, were badly mended, the magnificent trees stood so thickly as to spoil each other, the gates, with the exception of the one into the lane, were all half broken, and there was a sad poverty-stricken look about everything. The horseman rode along the grassy unused road, across which lay the evening shadows, up to a sort of wide irregular avenue, the large branches of the tall elms arching in a great green space, which ended in a farmyard, woodyard, rickyard, all in one. Beyond this lay a curious old timbered house, its gables and many mullioned windows showing that it had once been a place of much greater pretension than as belonging to the poor yeoman its present possessor.

All was very still: the unseen flail in a barn close at hand, the cawing of the rooks in the trees above, and an occasional low from a distant cow



LETTIE SEWING UP THE AMULET.

coming home to be milked, were the only sounds to be heard, and there was no one to be seen about the house.

He called several times without receiving any answer. At last he caught sight of a little girl standing quietly in a sort of island of light, where the sunshine came through an opening in the high trees down upon her golden hair.

"Is nobody at home?" said the horseman impatiently.

"Granny's in the house," replied the child in a very low, shy voice. He fastened his horse to a broken paling, and walked up to the beautiful old wooden porch, with a curious pinnacle in the carved gable, hung with a neglected tangle of vine and jessamine, and with a stone seat on each side. As he came near, a tall, dark, stern-looking woman of about fifty, dressed in black, appeared at the open door. Her features had the remains of having once been very handsome, but now the sad dreary determination in her face was its striking part.

She motioned her visitor, without speaking, into the house: he was evidently no welcome guest. In a few minutes he came out again. "You'll tell Wynate what I say," he called out, as he mounted his horse and rode away in an opposite direction to that in which he had come.

The child had continued almost motionless in the place where she had first seen him, but when he disappeared she gave a sigh of relief; she did not know him, but her instinct was as strongly against him as that of a bird which cowers away before a hawk.

She went on with her solitary play. A tall chestnut, a magnificent tower of bloom, stood at the end of the aisle of arching branches, leaving the blackness of the shadows under them still more striking. A shower of the blossoms had fallen after a little rain, and the child was stringing them upon a grass. She had hung herself over with long daisy chains; and the old shepherd smiled kindly at her as she passed.

"Thou'st made thyself rare and fine, my little maid," said he, affectionately.

Suddenly her grandmother's harsh voice was heard.

"Lettice, come in directly, child; it's time for you to be abed."

The little girl rose slowly, though obediently—bed has a gruesome sound on a May evening, flowers blooming, birds singing, cows lowing—it seems a terrible hardship to be shut up with eyes closed to all this beauty, while the sleep, which makes it endurable, if not pleasant, is not counted in a child's imagination.

As she reluctantly walked towards the house with her finger in her eye, a tall boy, about fifteen, with a merry look on his rosy brown face, came up behind her.

"Why, Lettice, what's the matter now, little one?" And he took her up in his arms as he spoke.

"Oh, uncle Edward," said she, flinging her arms round his neck in an ecstasy of hope, "mayn't I stay up for your supper; please mayn't I? It isn't seven o'clock yet. Oh, please," and she hugged him tightly.

"We'll see about it, little 'un; don't ye put yourself in such a way," answered he, carrying her straight into the sort of houseplace, half kitchen, half sitting-room, shut off from the entrance by a curious sort of black oak screen.

A grave, sad-looking man was standing by the latticed window at the further end, but he did not seem to see them come in. He was the true son of his mother—the same high forehead and deep-set eyes—but there had been a cross in the blood: the stern mouth and chin had not descended to him; there was a great deal of tenderness about the lines in his face, and what might be contemplation or the indecision produced, as sometimes happens, by the fear of giving pain.

"Mayn't Lettie stay up for supper to-night, Amyas?" said the boy, going up to his brother with the child still in his arms.

Amyas seemed to bring his thoughts up out of some far-off deep well, and even then required to have the question repeated before he took it in.

"She's much better abed," observed her grandmother, in a short tone.

"Nay, let the child stay with us this once, mother," replied Amyas, gently.

Mrs. Wynyate did not answer, and began in silence to make preparations for the meal.

"I should like some bread-and-milk to-night, mother," said the boy. And, without any observation or assistance from her, he went from the dairy to the pantry and back again to the kitchen fire, Lettice, in the full glory of "sitting up," following him like a little dog, carrying the plate, taking back the jug, and watching the boiling of the saucepan.

Two other brothers, strong sturdy fellows, strolled in. "Les quatre fils d'Aymon" were very unlike. These two seemed hardly above the level of labourers, and the few words which they uttered about their work, the way in which they cut their great slices of bread-and-cheese and cold fat bacon, and drank their deep draughts of thin cider, were of the same character—while Amyas had had a good deal of schooling as the eldest of the family, and so had Edward as the youngest.

"Could ye give me a dish o' tea, mother?" said Amyas, looking round rather drearily at the comfortless meal as he sat down to the long deal table.

"Tea's six shillings a pound," said Mrs. Wynyate, with a sort of short sigh, as she filled the teapot.

He drank his tea eagerly, but touched nothing else. It was a serious meal—it could hardly be otherwise with that stern woman seated at one end of the table, and that silent sad man at the other. But Lettice, sitting upon Edward's knee, was like the bit of sunshine in the avenue: she fed him with the bread-and-milk, and a low ripple of laughter went on between them at the landing of each "fish" out of the pool of milk into his mouth.

Mrs. Wynyate looked on with increasing disfavour.

"Sit up to the table, Ned, and don't crumb about," said she at last.

"They're not making a mess," said her uncle Amyas, gently, looking at her with the ghost of a smile. "Lettie's a tidy little lass,—neat, like her grandmother."

It was the second time that evening that he had interfered in her behalf, and she laid her soft little cheek against his arm as she sat next him in a passion of gratitude.

But execution came after the reprieve—the supper things were soon carried away and the child led off in earnest. She escaped from her stern grandmother's hands, however, once again and ran back.

"Good-night, uncle Amyas," said she, climbing up on his knee and putting her arms tenderly round his neck.

He kissed her very fondly, and set her silently down, and then justice had its course.

"Good-night, uncle Job, good-night, uncle John, good-night, Ted," she cried, as she was led off.

"You mustn't call your uncle, Ted," said Mrs. Wynyate, gravely.

Job and John kept hours with the cows and poultry; they were up with the sun, and thought no shame to go to bed with it. Edward had some boyish operation on a forked sort of root, which he was shaping with a knife, which took him a little longer, but even he soon disappeared, and Amyas and his mother were left alone.

"And he threatened they'd foreclose the mortgage?" said he, with a sort of dreary sigh. "Did he say how much time they'd allow to pay?"

Mrs. Wynyate was refooting a stocking by the miserable light of a "tallow dip."

"He said the interest hadn't been paid regular this dozen years; hardly ever in full, nor by yer father nor by you, and that yer couldn't expect any one to be kep' out of his money like that."

"And I'm sure I don't know where the money's to come from; with wheat down where 'tis, the farm didn't much more than pay the interest last year, and six mouths to feed off it."

"He said why didn't ye cut the trees, they was spiling one another and the land too, they were so thick."

"I meant to have done it this spring, but I couldn't find a good sale. We must cut 'em, but I hate touching the old timber," said Amyas, with a sort of groan. "I'll see and mark 'em now, however; but it's too late to fell the oak this spring," he added, with a kind of relief. And after sitting in silence for some time he, too, rose and went off to bed in the dark. Mrs. Wynyate's glimmering light, however, shone on hour after hour, as she sat and sewed, and mended, and darned, and patched, till far on into the night.

CHAPTER II.

AMYAS WYNATE AND HIS HOME.

THE Woodhouse was a yeoman's estate. It had been in the family of the Wynyates for many generations, gradually becoming more and more impoverished, mortgaged as it was almost up to the value of the last acre ; which is the case, indeed, with most of these properties. In the old days the yeoman class seems to have been prosperous and useful, but, under the present state of things, they cannot apparently keep pace with the farmers of other men's land, who bring in fresh capital and fresh ideas and energy, and are everywhere in England gradually dying out,—a curious contrast (whether for good or evil) to the "morcellement" going on in France. Although when Mrs. Wynyate married she was supposed to have made rather a grand match, if it had not been for the honour of it, her husband might as well have been without a foot of land. He was a good-natured, weak, self-indulgent man, "nobody's enemy but his own : " virtue was not amiable under his wife's stern aspect, and he took refuge in something a little more jovial at the "Marquis of Granby" or the "Barley Mow." Disagreeable virtue has a good deal of harm to answer for of this kind in the world. Feckless and wasteful, the little chance there was of setting the property straight vanished under his hands, and one winter's night, after a drunken bout, he did not return. He was not discovered till morning, when he was found in a sort of quagmire : he had ridden round and round a field half through the night, for "there weren't ne'er a gate in it," he said. He never recovered the cold and exposuro, rheumatic fever came on, and, at not quite fifty, he died, leaving a wife and six children, the youngest not six years old, to be provided for out of the land, weighed down as it was with debt. Amyas had lived almost entirely with his mother's brother, an old man with some money and a tanyard at the cathedral town near : a staunch Dissenter, in the days when dissent entailed an amount of petty persecution and annoyance which we have nearly forgotten. It was very real suffering for righteousness' sake, but sometimes, as in Amos King, it induced a certain manner of conscious virtue, of superior sanctity, which was trying to the nerves of weaker vessels. He had set his heart upon Amyas becoming a "minister : " he was a readin' lad, "a pious youth," and would be "a shining light" in the communion. As time went on, however, his nephew's tender heart and rather fastidious taste revolted against certain parts of the creed and discipline ; he was sticking at the doctrine of "reprobation," to his uncle's infinite distress, who was indeed as much horrified at the young man's daring to dissent from him, as the stoutest old canon in the close at his own nonconformity, and he complained in much the same sense, if not terms, at the "carnal self-sufficiency," the "wicked wilful blindness" which alone could produce such results. The right of private judgment was by no means an article of the Protestant faith (fifty years ago).

Poor Amyas was in a most painful state of perplexity and distress, when the knot was cut for him, by being suddenly summoned home on his father's death. There was no will or provision for the widow or her younger children, the property all came to him, and he found himself at three-and-twenty the head of the house, with the maintenance of a large family on his hands and little but debt to support them on. He knew more of theology than of farming, but he did his best, poor fellow: he never married, for how could a second family be maintained? He had toiled day and night to keep things together and to pay the interest, and now, after nine years, it seemed to him as if he had been "pouring water into baskets."

His mother was one of those stern, strong-willed women who go through life constantly worsted. She had never had the smallest influence with her husband or her only daughter, a beautiful self-willed girl, on whom she doated, perhaps the more for their not having a single quality in common. There is a slow power in fools, a strength in the weak, with which it is hopeless to contend. What impression can be made on water, which returns to its level again after the most convincing pressure?

A year after her father's death, when she was about eighteen, Letitia Wynyate had fallen in love with a man whom she had met at the neighbouring miller's, of whom her mother, with reason, thought very ill. After some furious scenes between the two, Letitia, who had never been crossed by either parent, went off to her friend's house, and was married from thence against her mother's most positive commands. Mrs. Wynyate never forgave it. Letitia made a sort of "offer" at friendship about two years after, but her mother's resentment was too deep: they once met, but it was coldly and stiffly. At the end of five years, however, peace was made in another way: Letitia died, leaving one child, whom she entreated her mother to take charge of, "or the poor thing would have nobody to look after her!" The implied slur on her husband mollified Mrs. Wynyate almost as much as the death itself, while the dreary feeling that she should never see her child again, and the thought of those long years of enforced silence, aged her ten years and more. But it did not soften her towards her granddaughter, she bore her a grudge, as if it had been the child's fault. She was very unlike her mother, and therefore Mrs. Wynyate determined that she reminded her of her father, and she "did her duty" to Lettie, which is of all things the most aggravating.

As the only representative of woman, however, in the house (no one could insult Mrs. Wynyate by considering her as belonging to the gentler sex), her four uncles, each in his own way, loved her and spoiled her, as is fit and proper for a little girl. Hers was a solitary little life in one sense; there were no children near to be had, but her playmates included the whole animal and vegetable creation within the domain of the Wynyates. As she sat on the ground next morning, with her great hunch of bread in one hand, and the tin porringer, which uncle Job had filled with

new milk as he passed with his pail into the dairy, the chickens flocked round her on the tenderest and most equal terms; the wheeling pigeons swooped within a foot of her head; the calves, the dogs, the horses, all seemed to treat her as a pet thing belonging to themselves. There was nothing about the place which disputed her supremacy but her grandmother and the old peacock, the most tyrannical and shrewish of his race, who led his hens a perfect life of it, and insulted Lettie whenever he met her.

She had finished her breakfast and was now standing, trying to hold out an olive-branch to this, after all, the least formidable of her enemies.

"Piccocks, piecocks, come and eat!" said she, when her Uncle Job, on his road once more between the dairy and the cows, came up as the fierce bird made a snatch at her, and drove him away.

"Thee must na' ha' nought to do with that surly beast, do'st thou hearken me, Lettie?"

"I want for to make friends wi' him," said the child, trembling all over.

"There's some folk, the more you calls 'um the more they won't come," said Job, sententiously; "and now yo go to Dannel, as is tumbling the butter in the milk-house," added he, as he went about his work.

The child went on willingly to the dairy. Daniel was an old blind man who did the churning under Amyas' benevolent rule, and was her best playfellow when Edward was at school.

He was standing in deep thought with the handle in his hand.

"Well, 'tis queer," said the old man, "how the butter won't come nohow some days! I b'lieve 'tis bewitched. Lettie, you get me two twigs of the rowan bush: we'll make a cross and stop *that*, anyways."

"How is it the witches does it?" inquired the child when she had brought the desired charm.

"Well, I can't say. My old woman she had a sovereign cuddled away in a drawer, and it's gone and no one's been nigh the house; but she did see a hare a runnin' off that evenin', close to the skillen, and p'r'aps that were she—the witches turn themselves into hares, they do, by-times, like Mall Do,* yer know, and my missis she flung a pobblestone at her, and p'r'aps that's the reason I'm so bad. I hets and burns and smerts all night, and my head he noises so that I be quite froghtened."

"P'r'aps you've a got the ague faver," said Mrs. Wynyate, looking in from the top of the stone steps to see how the butter was getting on.

"No, I've got no faver," answered the old man, doggedly. "I've got that as won't let it be faver," he whispered to Lettie as her grandmother retired.

* This remarkable zoological fact is chronicled on Mall Do's tombstone at Beaulieu.

"What is it, Dannel?" replied the child, in a low voice.

"Nay, thou' beesn't old enow to understand," said the old man, importantly. "I got he from the wise woman." He had miscalculated Mrs. Wynyate's distance, however; she had only retired as far as the passage closet.

"Show it me, Dannel," said she imperiously, from her vantage ground.

"It ayn't lucky for to look at he," replied the old man, peevishly; but she insisted, and at last, with a deep sigh, he pulled out a dirty little bag which she cruelly ripped open; it contained the charm on a bit of parchment.

"When Jesus Christ went to be crucifie
He said I have both ague and faver,
If ye shall kip my commandments
Yer neiver shall have nayther"—

ran the rude rhyme.

"That'll do ye no good," said Mrs. Wynyate, dictatorially; she had no faith in any nostrums but her own. "I'll giv ye some boiled snails or some Good Friday bread."

"Madam allays has her own way, sho's so stomachy* and high-minded," he said sadly to the child, who was doing her best to sew up the amulet again for him as before. "It'll have spoiled the vortue on it; but I shan't take the snails. She rubs me the wrong way o' the stuff like a cat, and it sets a body's back up, it do."

Mrs. Wynyate, busy as she was, took great pains in making the horrid decoction, but it was with the utmost satisfaction that he declared to Lettie, "'Twere an ugly handsel, and I just hulled it a' into the pig-wash."

That evening Ned came up to Lettie with the knobbed root, at the end of which, with his ever active knife, he had been shaping a kind of rude head.

"Here's a nice baby for you, Lettie," said he.

A child's imagination is so rich, so active, that it rather prefers a formless foundation on which it can build at its pleasure. It is not the grand pink and white lady in gorgeous clothing and a string to open and shut its eyes, but the battered, wretched thing without arms or legs, who is pressed passionately to its tender mother's breast, and only taken away at bed-time with tears. It seems to be the same with all uncultivated minds. "The wonder-working images are not the *chef-d'œuvres* of Raphael, but the blackened pictures, the formless stones," says a great man. Diana of Ephesus, "the image fallen from heaven," was probably nothing but a lump of ironstone. Therefore when Ned wrapped the root in a red pocket-handkerchief of his own, and tied it with a string round what was by courtesy called its waist, Lettie, in a rapture of delight, took it at once to her heart, and it became to her a "baby," and the most valuable confidant of all her griefs and joys. Most things were wrong in Mrs. Wynyate's

* "Whoso hath a proud look and high stomach."—Psalm 101.

code. She was a very conscientious woman, but her creed and her disposition reacted on each other; her sorrows and her methodism combined to throw a dark veil over the world, in which all amusements were tabooed, and even "of laughter she said in her heart, it is mad." Lettie was too young to understand all this, but a sort of instinct made her keep her precious baby out of her grandmother's sight, and it was some time before the criminal was discovered. At last, however, one day off her guard, she came into the kitchen hugging and nursing her prize, and singing lovingly to it.

"What's that horrid bundle?" said her grandmother, angrily. "I don't choose to have dolls in the house, don't you know that, Lettice? I shall burn the nasty thing." And she turned towards the fire, only stopping to save the handkerchief, and delayed by untying the curious knots in which it was tied before she carried out the sacrifice.

It is strange how entirely grown people forget the intense misery which children are capable of enduring; because of its short duration, that something else soon takes its place, men, and women too, laugh and talk of childish sorrows as "being nothing." They are as real as they are poignant, and a great deal more absolute than the pain which their elders endure: a child's horizon is so limited that it sees no issue to its woes, no hope, no remedy, no future—its sorrow as its joy absorbs its whole little being. When Lettie saw her beloved "baby" about to be cast into the flames, her horror was as great as that of the mother depicted in the "Judgment of Solomon," which hung upon the wall in very gorgeous pink and yellow colouring. She stood in a sort of tearless agony, with her hands clasped.

"Nay, mother," said Ted, with a smile, taking hold of her arm, "what harm can it do? Let the little mayd have her dollie!"

"I tell ye, I won't have her spoilt i' that fashion; it's dress and fine clothes and all them things that ruins the girls," said Mrs. Wynyate, vehemently, which was not quite in point, considering the attire and appearance of the monster.

"Mightn't she be buried?" said Lettice, in a low voice, as she watched the fate of her child trembling in the balance; "not burned, it wouldn't hurt her so much!"

At that moment Amyas came in at the kitchen door. "Why, what's the matter?" said he, struck by the exceedingly tragic appearance of the company.

"Mother wants to burn Lettie's dollie as I made for her. What hurt can it do for her to have one?" said Edward, sulkily, while Lettie ran up and embraced her uncle's leg as a deliverer of virtue in distress.

Amyas took the child up in his arms, pale with agitation. "Why, 'twould be like burning my little Lettie for me," said he, smiling. "I think Granny will spare it if we ask her," he added, turning kindly to his mother.

Lettie held out her arms for her rescued infant on this Solomon deci-

sion, and silently embraced her uncle and the hideous image with an equal passion of affection.

Mrs. Wynyate turned away without a word; her son had his own way by might of extreme gentleness and tenderness, and she rarely resisted his quiet fiats.

That night, after every one was in bed but himself, Amyas came in from looking after a sick horse; it was very late, and the moonlight streamed into the house through the two great unshuttered mullioned windows, and throw broad paths of light across the pavement.

As he closed the door behind him he saw the child in her little white night-dress, her small bare feet gleaming on the stones, passing like a spirit noiselessly across the hall.

"Lettie," said he, lifting her up and taking her cold hands in his, "what are you doing, my little 'un, running about at this time o' night?"

"I was looking to see whether Mary was safe," she said, shyly.

"Who's Mary?" answered her uncle.

"Dollie, I mean," she said, with a blush. A child is very reticent in general about what she most cares for. "I put her in a box in the parlour, and I wanted to be sure she was quite safe," she repeated, with a little nervous trembling all over her.

"This'll never do," muttered Amyas to himself; "she'll be down in a nervous fever next. Do you trust me, Lettie?" he said, turning her little face towards him in the moonlight.

The child's expression was the very ideal of faith.

"Then look, dear, I promise you that no harm shall happen to Mary; and now, little mayds make themselves ill if they run about o' this fashion in the night, and Lettie must promise when she goes to bed to lie still and sleep."

"I promise," said Lettie, religiously.

He carried her upstairs and put the little cold atom into his mother's bed.

"What's the matter?" said Mrs. Wynyate, rather crossly as she awoke, but Amyas was gone, only saying,—"I'll tell ye to-morrow; don't talk to her to-night, mother," as he left the room.

He never discussed, and the next morning all the explanation which she received was—

"We won't say any more about the child's pastime; just leave it, mother; I've promised that it shall take no hurt."

Amyas was a curious compound of strength and weakness. "You're so inconsistent," his mother often complained, which is pleasanter than saying we don't understand a character.

In Amyas the power of reflection overbalanced the powers of action. He saw so many sides to a question that it often made him seem irresolute, or he suffered so much from seeing pain inflicted by some act of his own (far more, indeed, than the patient,) that he undid decisions which it

had cost him much pain to arrive at. Somehow, in business matters, "il n'avait pas la main heureuse:" if he bought a cow she turned out a bad milker, his sheep had the foot-rot, his horses came to more grief than other men's—the "luck" always seemed against him, the tide turned while he was considering how to use it. His perceptions were very keen for all that concerned his affections: it did not answer to say or do anything before him under the idea that so apparently absent a man would not notice it; he saw and heard, by fits and starts it is true, but sometimes very inconveniently—having never, however, seen his estate in any other condition, going nowhere so as to compare it with others; and without sixpence to spend upon it, the luxuriant fences and the woody fields, the tumbling barns and the unmonded roads went on unchanged from year to year, though he was up early and down late, while the toiling and the molling seemed to bear no fruit but in the furrowing of his own cheeks and the premature whitening of his own head.

CHAPTER III.

FISHING IN THE HERON'S POOL.

THERE was a good deal of wood cut the next spring, and the sound of the axes resounded through the fields and woods. Amyas went daily round among the woodcutters, secretly lamenting over each tree as it fell, with a feeling as if it had been a living thing. Lettie accompanied him whenever she could get away, insisting conscientiously on climbing each fallen trunk, and being jumped down at the highest end. Her uncle submitted with unwearied patience; indeed if he had not been so patient it would have been better for the farm. Every labourer on the estate knew that it was impossible to put the "Master" out; if a man was so old and infirm that no one else would employ him, that was a reason why Amyas kept him on; if a boy was too young to be of much use to the neighbouring farmers, and wanted work, Amyas found a place for him. It would have taken a large fortune to pursue farming on such principles.

The two went on their devious way: Amyas with his hands clasped behind him and his meditative look; Lettie springing about like a parched pea, scrambling up a hedge for a flower, poking into the bushes after a nest, and coming up to explain her prizes in words which tumbled over each other from their eager interest. He saw more than she did, in spite of those bright little eyes of hers.

"That's a night-jar a-making that noise. Look at those ants marching like a regiment of soldiers?"

Her grandmother generally, however, insisted on some abominable bit of hemming, some grievous button-holes, just at the critical moment. She did not approve of the saturnalia of enjoyment consequent on going out with uncle Amyas.

"Why, that handkercher's grimed with dirt, Lettice, it's been so long about! I suppose you'll have finished that bit o' knitting by the time you're forty. Little girls should take to their needle, Amyas; I won't have ye muddle away the child's time with such nonsense. What's night-jars to her? and she gets in such a mess. You'll learn her no end o' untidy ways."

"Why, ye keep her always as neat as a new pin, mother," said Amyas smiling. "There's no fears of slatterns in your house."

Mrs. Wynyate was a very conscientious woman: she would have cut off her hand and cast it into the fire for what she believed to be right; but then she would have done it also by any of her children, which is not exactly the same thing—inflicting martyrdom is not quite so meritorious as enduring it as some people seem to think. She was at work from morning till night, never sparing herself in any toil or trouble; it was wonderful how one pair of hands got through so much. She laboured like the virtuous woman in Proverbs, and refused herself every indulgence and every pastime; but she had been brought up in the most rigid Methodist creed: she had an unfortunate temper, and it was aggravated instead of mended by her conviction that it was her duty to be stern. Discipline was much more thought of fifty years ago,—“Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it out for him,” as she put it, and the rod was therefore in constant requisition.

The Sabbath-day had always been a day of grief and wailing and gnashing of teeth to her children under her grim creed; but her sons had now pretty nearly grown beyond her power; she had almost come, indeed, to regard man as a stiff-necked creature from whom no result could be expected, but Lettice was a little girl whom it was her duty to mould, and it would be her fault if this small vessel of wrath was not rescued from reprobation. Sad was the sobbing, the putting in closets, the whipping over the stiff Methodist catechism, each point of doctrine proved by a string of texts, the chapter and verse given to each, and all to be learnt accurately; for Lettice, quick enough at her hymns, and who liked her chapter and her psalm, never could accomplish her “answers.” Any concrete image may be seized by a child—it is very open to the beauty of melody and rhythm, but an abstract metaphysical proposition is to it a mere string of unintelligible words which might as well be in Greek, and terrible were these engines of oppression for children (fifty years ago).

“She can learn fast enough when she likes it,” said her grandmother, in answer to Amyas's doubtful remonstrances. “I heerd her singing no end o' silly nonsense Ned had teachd her only the t'other day,” which was true enough, *i. e.* she could recollect when there was anything for her memory to take hold of; but this was beyond Mrs. Wynyate's comprehension, who honestly considered the child very naughty, and punished her accordingly. One Sunday evening, her task still undone, the tearful Lettie took refuge with her book by her uncle, who was sitting meditatively in the

orchard ; but she was not attending, as she ought to have been doing, to "The other benefits that we receive with justification are adoption and regeneration,"—the milk for babes "of seven years and upwards," which she had to learn. As she sat on her three-legged "cricket" by Amyas's side her quick little eyes caught sight at one moment of a duck, followed by her brood, going down to the pond ; at another the cooing of the pigeons in the high trees above their heads made her look up.

"Isn't it very wicked of the birds, Uncle Amyas, doing same as they does upon week days, like that ?" said she at last, feeling that her case was hard, and that if they were allowed to play she ought, at least, to have the comforts of self-righteousness, and pride of looking down on their evil ways.

Amyas was so modest a man that he always doubted his own judgment when opposed to others, and he had a beautiful respect for his mother, whom he really loved in spite of her sternness : moreover, he was too uncertain in his doubts as to the truth of her doctrines to formularise his opposition even to himself, and he was puzzled.

"Well, Lettie," he said at last, "thce see'st God mado 'um so, and, I suppose, He knew 'twas best. They can't sit still and read (not the birds), and p'r'aps He thinks they're praising him in their own way o' that fashion all the days of their lives, not only on the Sabbath-day ; and that's best of all, thou knowest, Paul says."

Luckily, Lettie was not logical, or she might have asked, like a celebrated prelate of late, whether something of the same kind might not be said in behalf of the children. Some of the most cruel things in the world have been done by the most excellent people, mistakes, want of imagination, ignorance, inflict almost as much suffering as wickedness. The early inquisitors were most conscientious, benevolent men, only anxious for the souls of their victims ; Luther directed that a child possessed by the devil should be drowned ; Sir Mathew Hale burnt a witch, all upon the highest principles : and Mrs. Wynyate made Lettie's life miserable from the sincerest desire to do right by the little girl's soul. Still, when we undertake the part of Providence to a child, it is perhaps well to make quite sure we have done our best to enlighten ourselves as to what is and what is not desirable.

"Uncle Amos is dead sudden, and they send word to bid me to the funeral, mother," said Amyas a day or two after.

"Dear heart, but 'tis a dreadful sudden take off ; I trust he had assurance of his soul. I know he was ever one of the elect from his youth up," replied Mrs. Wynyate.

Fifteen miles in those days was such a gulf that they rarely had any intercourse with Amos King, who, besides, had given his nephew to understand that he considered him as little better than a castaway, one who had put his hand to the plough and taken it away again. In spite of this estrangement, however, it was a sad expedition to Amyas's affectionate nature : he felt as if he ought not to have left the old man so long

without a sign, and it was with a sore heart that he prepared to ride over one evening, to return the next day after the ceremony.

- Mrs. Wynyate was doubly busy in his absence, and Lettie had a sort of holiday. At the bottom of the orchard was a wild tangle of hawthorn and holly, a secluded place where the child used to take refuge when she was afraid of being seen in the farmyard. Ned, too, when he was at home from school, had his own operations there: he was a born sportsman, and every hedgerow at the Woodhouse being a miniature copse, there was a good deal of game about, none of which came amiss to him: rabbits, weasels, pike and eel fishing, rat-hunts in the big barn, "nestes" of wild-fowl, on which Lettie reported progress with the utmost zeal.

It was the last day of his holidays, and a beautiful afternoon, when he came out to look for her, his mouth full of lines, both hands occupied with bait, and a landing-net over his shoulder. She was a pleasant little companion, and though he felt it to be a condescension on his part, he liked to have her with him.

There were some tall white lilies in the neglected bit of garden at the upper end of the orchard; they grew among the thorns and thistles and great dock-leaves, and looked almost more striking in their desolate beauty than set in trim borders. Lettie was sitting before them with her doll in her arms, talking and answering herself eagerly, quite unconscious that any one was near. A whole story seemed to be enacting:

"And the white ladies they say to me and baby, 'Little girl, take her up tight in your arms, and we'll go and dance with the king and the queen, and we fly up in the air so high over the tops of the trees' . . ."

"What are you doing, Lettie?" said the boy coming up, laughing, behind her. "Who are you talking to? who are the white ladies? Why, it sounds as if there were a dozen of ye!"

The little girl blushed deeply. Children have a curious horror of being laughed at.

"Who are the white ladies?" he repeated.

She pointed to the lilies; she did not like even so far to destroy the illusion as to name them.

"And what were they telling ye about the dance with the king and the queen?"

"You shouldn't laugh so, uncle Ned," said she, indignantly, driven to bay; "you tell yourself tales at school; there's that one about the gentleman as went away in a ship and found the great bird and the diamonds, and the old man that sat upon his shoulders. What are diamonds, uncle Ned?"

"No, we tell ourselves no tales except sometimes at dinner-time, and then we don't waste our time with rubbish stories about white ladies," said her uncle, in a grand and moral mood. "Now come down to the Heron's Pool: we'll set some night-lines," he added, making peace with this to him the most delightful occupation in the world.

It was a charming spot ; the branches of the great oaks still left swept down close to the little gravelly shore ; a heron stood contemplating life and the chance of a gudgeon on one leg at the upper end on a small spit of sand, and a dabchick was diving on the other side.

"May I go and paddle, uncle Ted ?" said Lettie, who was under strict orders never to go near the water by her little self, and for whom it therefore had a special attraction.

He was much too busy to reply, but he nodded his head ; and Lettie, to her infinite delight, unreprieved, pulled off her shoes and stockings and walked slowly into the tiny stream which ran out at one end of the pool, and as she grew bolder into the lake itself. Presently, although she thought she was very careful, the tail of her frock dipped into the water behind, and she wrung it dry with much trouble : then the little white feet slipped upon a stone and the front fell into the mud, and the more she rubbed the worse the stains appeared ; her grandmother's coming wrath grew terrible in her mind—the "you bad child" which was perpetually heard ; but as she knew all sins were alike in the eyes of a certain Draconian impartial justice, she now became reckless in her crimes, for the frock was past all hope of concealment. At last she spied a coot's nest, and creeping under the boughs she crawled along a half-dead willow-trunk which stuck far out into the water, and was just stretching out her hand to take out one of the eggs, when, to her horror, she saw her grandmother, who hardly ever left the immediate precincts of the house, coming along the road. She had been to look after a "cade lamb" in Amyas's absence ; she now saw her own suspended in the air, and called out in a wrathful voice,—

"Lettice, what are you doing there ? Come back directly !"

The child turned in terror, lost her hold on the slippery green moss, and tumbled into the deep water with a cry. Edward, who was close at hand, sprang up at the sound, and had plunged in and brought her to land almost before she sank. As he carried her home, dripping like himself from head to foot, Mrs. Wynyate, excessively angry with them both, followed behind, reproaching him with such effect, that whereas at first he had been both pained and penitent for what had happened, by the time they reached the house he was in as furious a state as his mother.

"Danger ! not a bit of it : the water wasn't up to my waist," he repeated. He was in an amphibious state of discipline between home and school, which made her cling the more to her waning authority. As for Lettie, she had torn and dirtied her frock and narrowly escaped drowning, two almost equally unpardonable offences in her grandmother's eyes. Even Amyas could not have saved her this time had he reached home ; she was whipped and put to bed, after which operation Mrs. Wynyate followed Ned, who had gone up to his own garret to change his wet clothes, and stood fiercely scolding over him all the time. He answered in her own tone, and she suddenly looked the door and left him supperless for the evening.

A little time afterwards, Amyas, coming in sadly from his uncle's funeral, found Lettie sobbing in an agony of fright and repentance upstairs, while Ned, who had climbed out of the window of his garret prison, and let himself down by the old pear-tree against the wall, at the risk of his neck, was marching up and down the room with her, fuming at the injustice and absurdity of his mother's punishments.

"As if I couldn't get out of that room easy enough! and as for Lettie, she'd never have fallen in a bit if it hadn't been for mother calling of her in a voice as would have frightened the dead! She blared at the little mayd like a polecat. I was close by—there wasn't no danger—where was the harm? She were with me fishing; where could she be better, I'd like to know? And who's a right to fish (you letting of me) sooner nor me, I wonder?" cried Ned, passionately.

Injustice has generally a different effect on boys and girls: a little girl's conscience is much more active; the sense of justice is much stronger in a boy. Lettie was overwhelmed with grief at her own wickedness in being nearly drowned, Ned was furious at the idea of punishing a misfortune, brought on, as he believed, by the judge herself.

"It's mother as ought to be beat! I'll tell ye what, Amyas, I won't stand it any longer; I've been thinking of it this age, I'll go out somewhere, into a trade or summat. I'll not stay any more, and be sat upon by my mother rampaging about like anything: I'm a man now, I'm a'most sixteen!"

Lettie's tears fell faster at these terrible threats. Amyas was silent.

"We'll talk of it all to-morrow, Ned," he said at last, quietly. "If you're a man you should behave as one, and not speak as you did to mother but now. You'd best perhaps go to bed now; I'll fetch the key and your supper up here. Quiet the little one a bit," he whispered kindly, as he went out; "see, she's like to go into a fit she's so flustered, and be thankful, my boy: we should have been bad off if aught had befallen her." Ned's under lip had begun to quiver, and it was evident that if it had not been for his manhood the hardened sinner would, by this time, have burst out crying.

Amyas found his mother sternly preparing supper, with a pretence to herself that all was right upstairs, and that her conduct had been most judicious.

"And now ye tell me about yer uncle," said she as he took the basin of bread-and-milk which she offered him and turned to carry it upstairs. "I warn yer, Amyas, it's just flying in the face of Providence" (whatever that curious process may be), "for you to give them children their own way i' that fashion."

"Dear mother," he answered quietly, as he went out, "they're not having their own way: Ned is going to bed with a sore heart, and the little 'un's frightened half out o' her wits; they'll not do it again, anyhow."

The two culprits fed together in silence, Lettice hardly touching the food, and the boy went off to bed.

"And now, my little 'un, what's that pretty hymn-carol you says? 'It was not down to housen gay, that Christ a child came for to stay,'" said Amyas, looking at the small, flushed, tear-stained face.

The child knelt up, looking like an infant Samuel, laid her head tenderly against him, and repeated the half-charm, half-prayer.

"And now my little Lettie's going to sleep, God bless her, and all will be right to-morrow!" And under the shadow of his wing she lay down to rest.

"Uncle Amyas, are you there?" she started up once or twice to say; but he was still standing at the window, waiting patiently till she was asleep, and looking out at the deepening twilight. He had had a trying day, and would have been glad of a quiet evening; and here on his return he found that in the course of her one day's driving, his mother had contrived to upset the coach: a painful proof, which he could have dispensed with, that he was master in his own household. And then his thoughts went back to the scene at his uncle's funeral: when the will was opened after their return from the churchyard, it was found, to his astonishment, that the old man, who had quarrelled with his daughter and her husband, had left Amyas all his property. He had immediately taken steps to transfer the whole to his unlucky cousin, who scarcely thanked him, but observed coldly that "so far as she could see he had only done his duty like as everybody ought to do." And Amyas was quite of the same mind, and thought also that such a self-evident thing as one's duty was the only one possible, and required no thanks.

It was not the property that now was in his mind: he was thinking regretfully, that he should never see the old man again. "And I could have asked him help find a place for Ned," said he to himself. He was not so alarmed about the wickedness of the world as his mother, but the boy was full young to be sent out to fare for himself, and he began to inquire whether he were not himself to blame in the management of the lad: it somehow never seemed to occur to him to find fault with anybody but himself. A very tender conscience becomes occasionally an unconscionable tyrant.

"And you haven't telled me anything yet about Amos!" said his mother, when he came downstairs. "And how did he die? and how were it with his soul, taken off so sudden? And about his will, what have he a done with all that nice little bit o' property as he owned?" she went on, somewhat glad to escape out of the "ignorant present" of the concerns about her.

And Amyas told her everything excepting the important part of his day's work, and the change he had made in the will. What was the use of discussing the matter?

"I did think as he'd a left you or me summat out o' all that money," said Mrs. Wynate, somewhat discontentedly, "and his daughter marrying to disoblige her family."

"Surely, mother, it's his own child a man should leave his fortune to, if he's got one," replied Amyas, quietly, as he went off to bed. "And Susan have a sent you the old cuckoo-clock as were your father's, you know, as a keepsake."

"Well, and I shall be glad for to see its old face again, and hear the chime. I mind that cuckoo singing that way ever sin I were a child—eh, what a many years ago!" said Mrs. Wynyate, with unwonted feeling. And Amyas did not mention that when he had asked for this little waif out of the property which he had given up, as a recollection for his mother, Mrs. Susan had demurred at parting with it, and had only finally yielded because, as she said, "after all, we've a got a better one at home, and it loses so as I don't know as we've any use for it in the kitchen here." Amyas was a perfect non-conductor for all cross words or unkind actions: they all died a natural death and were buried when they reached him.

The next morning Ned was firm in his fancy to leave home, and Amyas could not but agree, though it went to his heart to part with the boy. He could not afford to keep him longer at school, and there was no room for him in the Wynyate household, where the feud between him and his mother was always smouldering. She expected the submission of a child from the great lad, where her efforts of strong-willed, impotent authority were always made without the hope that the master of the house would stand by her in her unreasonable claims. She had attempted the same with her husband about the public-house, and with her daughter about her acquaintance and her marriage, never considering the use of laying down positive commands which she had no power to enforce. As with many other people, there was a confusion in her thoughts between her own will and the will of heaven: she had an unfortunate temper, and she often could not distinguish between its decrees and those of Providence; her own opinion and abstract right were honestly the same in her eyes, and there is evidently positive impiety in viewing a thing or acting differently from abstract right.

"So young Ned's a-goin' to leave us! I thowt as it weren't for nowt as I heerd the old ash-tree a-groanin' by our door last night," said the old blind man next day, when the great event was announced to him. "I bean't sure as it isn't quite right; he's the littlest on 'um, but he's ever been the most rumbustical: and when childer takes to their ranties, seems as if we'd no call for to kip 'um at home any more. So dunnot ye cry, my little mayd, he'll do well enough. If they can't be comf'able in their nestes at home, my old woman used allays for to zay zays she, 'Why, let 'um goo; they must jist fight along like as we did afore 'um.' 'Tis like the birds: when they're big enough they just flies away from the old 'uns, and it's a chance they never sees 'um again, or else how ever could there be folk enough out in the wide world for to make all things goo?"

"But what shall I do without him, Dannel?" said the tender-hearted Lettie, not at all consoled by this philosophic view of the demands of

humanity upon man. She looked very pale and shaken with the performances of the day before.

"He'll come back fast enough, child : an he's ailing or sorrowful, the old place will look fair in his eyes when he's a long way off, and 'twill have long strings to his heart for to pull it back. Don't ye be afraid, poor dear heart, he'll rub along."

CHAPTER IV.

LETTIE'S SCHOOLMASTERS.

AMYNAS had so few ties with the outer world that it was with great difficulty a small place as clerk, without any salary, was at length found for Edward at a little seaport town some twenty miles away.

The boy's courage rather failed when he found himself committed, to leaving home, but his dignity held him up, and when the time at last arrived, he went off apparently undismayed and of good courage. AMYNAS was, indeed, the most distressed of the two, which gave the lad a reason for heroism and a feeling of dignity as the strong man of the family.

"Don't cry !" said he, majestically, to Lettice, who hung round him, drowned in tears, as if he had been going to the antipodes. "I dare say you'll all do pretty well in a short time, little 'un, without me. You'll get over it, Lettice, in a while," he repeated ; "and mind yer don't forget the terrier pups : they're to be ready afore I come home again for rabbiting, you'll recollect ?" And as he drove off in the taxed-cart to join the coach, he called out once more to his sorrowing relatives, "You'll not forget the pups !"

The boy, indeed, would have been shocked to see how well everything went on at the Woodhouse after his important departure. Lettice's tender little heart never quite forgot him, and in her solitary plays "uncle Edward" always enacted the part in her mind of all the heroes, and good knights and genii ; else all was as before. Her chief playfellow now was the old blind man.

One bright beautiful day that autumn there was high feast and festival going on in the great old orchard behind the house, for the cider-press had come up, and everybody about the farm had come in to help. The apple-trees, large and spreading, covered with the weird grey moss which clothes the branches in that soft damp climate with a sort of hoary hair, were hung with red and golden fruit and looked very idyllic. It was a prolific year, and the boughs were so laden that they would have broken under the weight of apples if they had not been propped up. Great baskets stood about in all directions to receive them ; and a good deal of rude jollity was going on in this English vintage. The men were perched in the higher branches, and the women stood below catching the fruit, collecting it on the ground, picking out the decayed apples, and emptying the

others into the insatiable maw of the rude cider-press, which turned with a harsh creaking; grating noise, pressing 'out the juice into pails on one side, while the most imperfectly crushed apples were carried off on the other for the pigs.

"It's pretty late: you go and fetch Dannel home from the cider-wring; he's tired, and you too," said her uncle, smiling at Lettice, who had been running out all day, assisting greatly, as she considered, in all the processes.

"We've pretty nigh done now," said the old man, wearily, as she steered him carefully up among the piles of fruit. "He's a beautiful man, yer uncle, he is. I'm terrible much obliged to he. Madam Wynyate's trimming comikle in her temper, contrairy like, and I should just ha' toddled away years ago if it weren't along o' he: I knows that well enough."

"But you do a greatish deal, Dannel, up and down," said the child, as he stumbled among the apples.

"Well," answered the old man, with some pride, "I'm tottery, and creaky, and wheezy, but I can twiddle about after summat as well as most on 'um, and I'm none for wasting my time as the young 'uns is. There ayn't narrer an orchat anywhere as this 'un; and that ratheripe* allays do bear such a wonderful deal o' his† fruit," he said, looking about with the curious affectation of being able to see common among the blind. "The moon's at the full to-night, an' they'll well-nigh finish wi' the cider, I take it, with the help o' she."

"Them marks on her face looks so plain," mused Lettie. "What is they, Dannel?"

"That's the man as stole a nitch o' wood o' the Sabbath-day," replied he, "and he were sot up there for a warnin' to them as wants it—I don't. Yer graunny allays thinks ill o' folk; she takes 'um by the wrong end, she do," muttered he, his wrongs rankling in his mind as they approached the house, and he heard Mrs. Wynyate's voice stern and sad.

"So yer uncle left yer the money after all, and not to Susan a bit," she was saying, rather reproachfully, to Amyas. "I've just a heerd it from the man wi' the cider-wring, and he heerd it over at Wallcott's when he were there. Wallcott laughed he did, and said how could ye be so soft, and pressed for money so bad?"

"Susan were poor and wanted it," replied Amyas, in an apologetic tone.

"And who was poor and wanted it here, I'd like to know?" grumbled his mother, as she went off to the cider. She was proud of his conduct for all this, though upon principle she spoke (and at great length too,) when things were wrong, but kept silence when they were right, which is a depressing and dispiriting way of conducting life.

* "Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies."—*Lycidas*.

† "If the salt have lost (his) savour."—"Its" does not occur once in our translation of the Bible, and only three times in Shakspeare.

"There, that's just him and her all over," continued the old man. "I mind one day when Norton Lisle were a-comin' after yer mother. . . . What's come o' yer father?" he said, suddenly turning to the child.

"My father!" cried the little girl, surprised. No one ever mentioned him, and he had quite died out of her little life; but the word recalled old times in her childish recollections of something painful, though she could not have told what they were.

"Yea, he ayn't much of a one for to boast on, but he is thy father anyhow, and thou oughtest not to be kep from knowin' o' him, as I take it they does by thee," the old man went on with some glee. "I likes to rip up a mystery," he mumbled to himself, "and 'twill vex madam."

"Why doesn't he come hore?" asked the little girl in an awe-struck whisper.

"I take it thy grandmother couldn't abide he, and then he's a deal up and down adoin' what he likes, and he have just adroppod thee into anither's nest like a cuckoo, and goes about the world free like, wi'out incumbrances. I heerd on him last down at Southport, sailin' for furrin' parts, Australia or 'Merikee, or some o' them. P'r'aps he mayn't come back agin at all, who knows? But don't ye tell madam as I talked on him," said he, as they entered the house.

Amyas's fortunes seemed now to improve a little. There was a further fall of timber that winter, the price of wheat rose, as did that of bark, and he was able to tide over some of his difficulties, for a time at least.

He began to look a little after Lettice's education, and she learnt more of the three R's than Mrs. Wynyate at all approved of.

"As for reading, there isn't much use, as I see, for more o' that than 'll do the Catechism;" and as for arithmetic, anything beyond what was required to calculate the pounds of butter was sheer robbery of the dairy. Still, Lettice was quick at learning, and got on in spite of her grandmother's warnings of all sorts of evil connected with knowledge, ever since the days of grandmother Eve.

A considerable part of one's education, however, is that which nobody has given or is answerable for: the accidental inferences, the chance ideas, which are sown like seeds before the wind, and bear fruit, no one knows how or whence.

The old "dark" man was exceedingly fond of her, but, with the love of power so common among the blind, he exercised it somewhat despotically.

"And what d'ye hear o' yer uncle?" he would say, importantly. "I'm in hopes as he's a got plenty to do, and does it, not all along like yer father. What is it yer little hymn says?—'And Satan finds some mischief still for idle folk.' And, I take it, the Devil's always uncommon handy for to tempt them as holds out their hands to him. Ye know he's like a ragin' lion up and down the world."

"Was he ever seen lately, d'ye think, Dannel?" whispered Lettie, almost too frightened to put her query.

"Bless ye, child, yes! Lambourne seed he as plain as the church

tower, at the turn in the Deep Lane, like a calf wi' saucer eyes, and I heerd o' one as had a sore struggle wi' him for's soul, dying down at Fordingdean."

Pleased with the effect he produced, the old man's stories grew more and more dreadful, and his accounts of the real presence of the Evil One began to take possession of the young girl's imagination. One night, as she was preparing for her little evening devotions, it seemed to her as if "he" was himself present in bodily form in the room, to prevent her from uttering her prayer. St. Agnes herself could hardly have seemed a more unlikely subject for the assaults of the fiend than the young girl, standing trombling in the shadow of the still moonlight, and looking the very emblem of purity, in her white night dress. The wide old latticed window had been partially walled up to save the tax, and the single high upright stone mullion which remained, with its horizontal bar, threw the shadow of a cross on the floor and over her little bed, as she had often liked to see. At length, though in a paroxysm of terror, she knelt down close by it as a sort of protection and pronounced the holy words in his despite, and then, taking her Bible in her hand—the recognized amulet against the power of the Devil—she turned with desperate courage to face and confound him. To her infinite amazement and relief there was no one to be seen. He was not there!

From that time she began to doubt whether there might not be a little mistake, and whether Satan was in the habit of walking into people's houses in this familiar way, at the present time, whatever might have been the case in former days. Her scepticism did not reach further, for was there not a formidable picture of the Witch of Endor in the folio Bible, which she always turned over in an agony of dread lest the horrid image should haunt her dreams, though, Eve like, having once "peeped" at it, her caution was of little use.

Some time after she was sitting by her uncle as usual on the Sunday evening, as she dearly loved to do, when the whole world seemed at rest, and he had time for "discourse." It was still broad sunshine, and warm, which disposes to courage; and private, which disposes to confidence.

"Uncle Amyas," said she, suddenly, "did you ever see the Devil your own self?"

"No, child," he answered, laughing (and a great comfort the laugh was to her mind), "nor any one else that I know of. Are ye afraid of meeting him some day out walking?"

"But, uncle Amyas," said she, evading the home thrust, "ye know it's said about his coming roaring to Bunyan, and how he was always hearing of him calling out all manner of temptations, and many folk have seen him too in the books, or how should they ha' told how he was made, ye know? Them horns and his tail, ye know. Somebody must have seen him sometime." The *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Bunyan's Life* were almost her only reading beside the Bible.

"Well, my little 'un," answered Amyas, slowly, "for a' that I don't believe that he's seen. Evil temptations is strong enow in our own hearts in a' conscience, and p'r'aps they thinks of him till they believe they sees him wi' their eyes. I can't say ; but I take it, even if the Devil is as they tell on, that he's felt, not seen. No ; I don't believe in him one bit," he went on with sudden energy ; "'twould be a good God and an evil God if he's so strong and powerful as all that. Don't thee mind in Job how Satan's just sent out like one of the other angels—that's a very different concern. Don't ye be frightened that way, my little mayd. Ye needn't be afraid o' him nor any other ' bugs ; ' God is about us in all our ways, both to will and to do ; not that other one."

Lettie was trying to prove the worth of her convictions in real life. Her grandmother's teaching had borne its fruit : she honestly believed in her own exceeding wickedness, over which, by fits and starts, she lamented herself with most sincere sorrow. A curious feeling of unreality about it sometimes came over her, but she put it from her with horror, and only esteemed it a fresh proof of her "parlous state." An odd volume of *Fox's Book of Martyrs* had got into the house, together with a dozen cotton umbrellas and a pile of manuscript violin music—effects from a bad debt (somehow Amyas often had bad debts)—and the stories of their sufferings had a grim attraction for her imagination. One night, as she sat in the window reading and considering whether she could have suffered for her faith like Latimer, or like Faithful in *Vanity Fair*—the one was to her as real an historical event as the other—she put her finger close to the candle to try. She held it manfully for a second or two, but snatched it away when it began to sting, and she cried bitterly afterwards as she bewailed her extreme sinfulness, proved thus by this searching test. She was carrying out her little experiments in philosophy and religion like greater folk.

A Dialogue on Finality.

—♦—

Scene—A terrace, commanding a valley opening to the west, with woods, meadows, and water.

Time—Evening.

—♦—

Alexis. Lovely as this valley is, and well suited to the smiling calmness of a summer's evening, there are changes in it, since the old times when I first remember it, which are not all for the best.

Isidore. The common complaint when we get on in life, is it not? Peaches are so different from what peaches were! However, there is truth in what you say concerning our "happy valley." The tyrant of the age has laid his iron rod on its back since the old times you remember, and has straightened the natural meanderings of the stream into artificial lines to tally with the march of his footsteps.

Alexis. That is one thing: Nature has been coerced. But there is another and a contrary cause of the deterioration I speak of. Nature has in some sense been allowed *too much* play. The trees have grown so prodigiously in breadth and height that the other features of the scenery have lost their importance in the landscape. The foreground dwarfs and also chokes the distance.

Isidore. This is perhaps too frequently the case in our part of the country. The natural growth of foliage is very rapid with us; and proprietors have a pertinacity in keeping up their woods: a sort of pride, I believe, looking upon every individual oak and elm as a title to honour, α κτῆμα τίς αἰ.

Alexis. An umbrageous tree, no doubt, is a thing of glory. But it may be wrongly placed, and blot out greater beauties: blue sky, sunshine, swelling lawns, and soft suggestive horizon.

Isidore. Perhaps I should agree with you, but I am not master here. Many men—and Urbanus is one—shrink from "making a clearance," under the idea that an unsightly gap or ragged edge will be left, which it will take many years to soften down sufficiently. It is the worst of landscape gardening that one has both to plant and to clear for futurity.

Alexis. And often not for one's own futurity at all. Life is so hurried, and Nature so leisurely.

Isidore. And yet we call man Nature's master.

Alexis. Much in the same sense in which the imperious slave-driver is master of the sluggish slave. "The more massa strike me the more I can't work," says the slave. It is children only who plant a garden with cut flowers. You must adapt your requisitions to Nature's capabilities

before you can get any thing out of her. To work her against her own laws, is simply of no use at all. She smiles at you scornfully, and punishes you by her inveterate rigidity.

Isidore. Ah! what a mockery is this "mastery" on man's part after all. The creature of a day lording it over the phenomenal sequences of centuries!

Alexis. The Geneva watch you wound up last night claiming to hold out with an eight-day clock! No novel topic of regret. Theophrastus, the Greek philosopher, dying, as tradition reports, at the age of a hundred and seven, complained in his last moments of the perverse appointment of destiny, in that, while to the unreasoning deer of the forest and fowls of the air she had accorded a length of life far surpassing that of man; to him, the noblest of nature's works, the crown of all created beings, the lord and master of other animals, she had granted but a scanty measure of time on earth; too scanty for doing more than beginning those achievements of thought and skill of which he alone and no other animal is capable. Were man ordained to hold the raven's lease of life, and the raven's years curtailed to the present span of man, how much better adjusted would have been the economy of the world: how would knowledge have increased, how would art and science have been brought to perfection; and to the human agent himself, how much more hopeful would have been his studies, his plans, his projects!

Isidore. The ideas of Theophrastus about animal longevity bordered on the mythical, perhaps. But let us fall in with the train of thought suggested. Let us imagine man's years restored at once to the patriarchal pattern. Fancy Sir Isaac Newton still at work with Lord Rosse's telescope to help him! Or fancy Faraday not stopped short at his seventy years' term, but with two or three centuries before him, in which to trace out at leisure the many delicate threads of analysis and inference already begun in his mind! Or fancy Shakspeare a Methuselah!

Alexis. I doubt whether Shakspeare would have found that the lapse of ages altered much his focus of observation for the grand and petty passions of human nature. His Macbeth and Falstaff repeat themselves pretty accurately in the successive generations of our kind. "Ein alter Mann ist stets ein König Lear," as Göthe says.

Isidore. If man's allotted term were to be prolonged in the way Theophrastus suggests, it might, perhaps, be difficult to find room for our population. There ought, at least, to be some principle of "natural selection" at work. The great intellects should be self-perpetuated, in virtue of their strength; those who could be little better than Strulbrugs in extreme old age should be allowed to die off—the sooner the better. In fact, I should suggest a process of either indefinite compound multiplication or indefinite compound subtraction to be applied to each man's vitality at the apex of life, according as he had proved his just claim to the one or the other. Then, indeed, we should have an Utopian world.

Alexis. But the world being in this respect not Utopian, but very much the reverse, I am fond myself of "drawing a moral" (like the duchess in *Wonderland*), especially when there is anything in the actual conditions of the world which seems to give force to the old familiar facts.

Isidore. Which moral? *Ars longa, vita brevis*—therefore we should be diligent schoolboys, and make the most of our time? or the equally venerable, but somewhat contradictory one, Life is short: don't care a doit for anything it has to offer? The discrepancy between which, by the way, always reminds me of a conversation which used to be reported to me as having passed between two excellent ladies of the "Clapham sect," when that sect was much more numerous among the *élite* of the professional world than it is now-a-days. Lady X. and Lady Y. were two matrons whose spouses had recently been baroneted for services to the State or to science. Lady X. had long given up the snares of the world, not only from her religious opinions, but also because she was an invalid, and had one foot always more or less in the grave, as her friends supposed. "*Dear Lady Y.,*" she said to her sympathetic visitor one day, "you will be surprised, perhaps, at what I am going to say, but I think of going to the next drawing-room." Lady Y. "*Dear friend, are you in earnest?*" Lady X. (with a celestial sigh). "Yes, dear Lady Y., life is short!" Lady Y. (with an equally celestial smile). "*I know, dear Lady X., life is short; but why, may I ask—I don't quite understand—why is that a reason for your going to court?*" Lady X. "Because, dear friend, there is no knowing how soon I may be called, and if I miss this drawing-room it may be too late. I have a duty to my family," &c.

Alexis. Well, neither of these is precisely the view of the case that occurs to me now, having just put down the newspapers, with their stirring records, and turned out to enjoy the splendours of this delicious evening.

Isidore. Very good reasons, it cannot be denied, both against dying and against going to court as a matter of taste.

Alexis. As to your second, the *non curare* lesson, it is true, of all arguments to abate pride and self-sufficiency, there is none half so forcible, because none so demonstrably and undeniably true, as this of the shortness of life. Trite it is, to the last degree of triteness. The oldest of poets and the oldest of prophets were as familiar with it as we who have seen thousands more of years filled with the fitting shapes of generation after generation. "As the leaves of a tree so are the generations of man." "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble:" and Homer saw in the wrath of Achilles, and the pleasures of Paris, and the vengeance of Atreides, with all their attendant strife and enterprise, but so many harvests for Fate's autumnal blast; and Job, bowed down with the anguish which lengthens time more than the flight of minutes, pleaded that man's insignificant duration on earth might well exempt him from God's chastisements as from God's regard.

Isidore. If you once get upon this topic there is no end to the noble army

of moralists you may rally to your standard, from Epictetus and Marcus Antoninus to Pascal and Thomas à Kempis ; from Thomas à Kempis and Pascal to the *Spectator* and Dr. Johnson ; all flourishing their weapons in the same cause, though displaying noticeable varieties in the cut of their uniform. But, seriously, does not this anomaly in the order of nature put the complacent theology of the "Bridgewater Treatises" a little out of court ? Why is man, to whom to understand and utilize Nature is so interesting and ennobling an employment, fitted to it so incongruously in the article of duration ?

Alexis. It is, indeed, a most cogent argument that this is not the best of all possible worlds.

Isidore. Might we not go farther ? does it not to some extent militate against the notion of an overruling Providence ? This want of fitness, of symmetry, of apparent reason in the order of things, is it not what one would call accident or failure in any analogous display of terrestrial agency ? In fairness the sceptic should be allowed to set this against the nice adaptation of means to ends which constitutes the usual induction from final causes to a supreme intelligence.

Alexis. On my mind it has a precisely opposite effect. In its uniformity and inflexibility this law of the brief duration of man's life leads me to infer some purpose not less surely than do other arrangements which appear more directly harmonious and appropriate. And if the purpose is one which does not explain itself in the present stage of existence, we are driven, perforce, to extend our vision to a wider sphere.

Isidore. Assuredly, if we measure the personal gains of man's existence on earth with his desires and capacities, the result is poor enough.

Alexis. We must not confound the particular thought which I incline to dwell upon, with another which tends in the same direction but does not hit precisely the same point. One of the most effective *a priori* arguments for a future existence to man is grounded on the inadequate scope afforded here for his affections and aspirations. Whereas the beasts of the field have in the present state of being their full satisfaction, possessing no appetites but what nature's resources are abundantly able to gratify ; man, on the contrary, has distinct cravings not limited by sense ; and both the kind and degree of happiness to which he aspires in his highest moments are infinitely beyond what life under its best conditions can supply. This argument for a spiritual immortality is striking, and, in its ultimate bearings, irrefutable ; but it is not every one who, from experience, will accept it. There are many, unquestionably, who do *not* require more than this world can give them ; who find its return of interests sufficient to content their moral and intellectual being ; who, if they ever have been conscious of the restless demands of the highest genius or goodness, have learned so to tone them down to the ordinary conditions of existence that the gains and achievements of each day and year leave no room for unsatisfied feeling.

Isidore. Surely such perfect content is not possible? None are exempt from the sorrows of life, sickness, loss of friends, of fortune.

Alexis. Not usually; but chance, or Providence, may spare them life's sharper sorrows; and sound bodily constitution, healthy stomach and strong nerves, quick circulation and happy temper, go far to make this world a paradise for whatever a man wishes to find in it. Coleridge, not himself a personage weighted with happiness, said, "Existence itself gives a claim to joy. . . . We have to earn the earth before we can think of earning heaven." The presumption of an immortality, then, grounded on unsatisfied instincts, though very sound, looking at human nature on one side of its constitution, need not, does not, come home to all men at all times, and may be set aside by the sanguine, the light-hearted, the busy, the successful. But it is precisely these classes whom the conviction of life's *brevery* must most powerfully touch. It is the happy and active-minded, those who find this stage of being and its countless interests enough for them, those who wish to live, who see the use, the importance of living,—who are most calculated to wonder, to regret, to cavil at the inexorable fact that life *must* end.

Isidore. I think it is true that life is least loved by those who have fewest ideas. Of how little account is it generally held by the debased millions of Indians and Chinese. Among ourselves, too, the uneducated poor, to whom life affords such scant entertainment, show often marvellously little disinclination to dying; whereas, under the pressure of much pain and privation, I have known the virtuous and highly cultivated express a strong desire for prolonged existence, and that, not only for the sake of those they are leaving behind, but because they have a keen relish for life on their own account. Nay, even when content to go, it is not uncommon to see minds of the highest tone keeping fast hold on life's general concerns to the very last. Bunsen read the *Cologne Gazette* along with the Bible on his death-bed. A friend of mine, an excellent and earnest woman, expressed her thankfulness on the last morning of her mortal illness that she had lived to hear of the inauguration of the Atlantic Telegraph.

Alexis. There can be no doubt that the present age is one in which the moral of finality is peculiarly fitted to strike the imagination. It is an age more perhaps than all others instinct with thought and energy and movement and progress; an age when, if man were but as long-lived as the tree he plants, his self-confidence could scarcely fail to be over-weening. During the last thirty years the world has lived at a rate out of all proportion to former times. Inquiry has been more daring, discovery more rapid than it ever was before; and that in all directions: discovery by sea and land; discovery among the primeval elements of the world's formation; discovery among the buried monuments of pre-historic life; discovery tending to throw argument, if not light, on man's origin; discovery in the combinations of chemistry, in the agencies of light, in the mechanic forces of the elements, in the secrets of the electric current;

discovery even in the remote and apparently useless geographical mysteries which have puzzled mankind for so many centuries. What wonder that men should tread the earth more proudly when they have held it on the rack, as it were, tortured it, and compelled it to confess its secrets ?

Isidore :—

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind fury with th' abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life.

Alexis. Yes : a Brunel and a Stephenson, after spanning precipices and piercing rocks, and beating back the waves of the sea, die in the prime of manhood, with the embryo plans of many similar triumphs over seeming impossibilities in their brain. Speke (the discoverer, not the "discovered,") all eagerness to prove that he has solved the oldest and most famous of geographical puzzles, passes into sudden darkness with all his arguments and his memories,—is cut off, like his predecessor Bruce, by the merest accident of home life. Cavour, while reconstructing Italy, with a will and an insight such as, alas ! he has been able to delegate to none of his fellow-politicians, is called to a world where Italy's reconstruction is a thing of nought. It would often seem as though Fate delighted in cutting off, in the fulness of their powers, precisely those who seem to have the firmest grip on vitality in virtue of their conquering activity.

Isidore. The twenty-four hours of the watch are little enough ; but when it stops midway, our calculations are indeed thrown out. ,

Alexis. These are the more striking incidents ; but in reality the longest life reads the same lesson quite as impressively as that which is, as we say, prematurely cut short. Some accomplish exactly the task they were fitted for, and so far their existence may be said by onlookers to be complete ; but more commonly each life is a tale of partial achievements, fragments begun and postponed ; and those who have in some sort brought their day's work to a rounded conclusion, may not hope to witness its effect on futurity. Brougham, dying at the age of ninety, sees his foreign settlement of Cannes developed into a fashionable watering-place ; but he leaves England still agonizing to give her people the rudiments of a national education, notwithstanding his vaunted diffusion of Useful Knowledge forty years ago.

Isidore. And in Parliamentary Reform he sees the boundary marks of Finality altogether carried away ; washed into the distance, like fences before a winter's flood !

Alexis. In connection with this subject, a very suggestive contrast, it seems to me, might be drawn between the mental habits of mankind in our own days and in former ages. Time was when Finality used to be predicated in every domain of intelligence. Schoolmen's logic defined the limits of philosophy : natural science might never dream of outstepping the letter of Scripture ; art even was stereotyped in the conventional

representations of Byzantine and "pre-Raphaelite" painters. Religious faith of course was absolutely crystallised in dogmatic creeds.

Isidore. And is so still ; at all events with a large section of society.

Alexis. Well, Conservatism no doubt here does vigorous battle still with the spirit of the age. But this is a perilous controversy, and has no immediate concern with what I am saying. I mean, that to minds trained in these old methods of thought, it is conceivable that the end of life may have seemed more natural and fitting, so to speak. Now, the advanced intellect of our time recognizes Finality in no one department of phenomenal observation ; and yet, given up as a law in philosophy and science—here is the momentous, it may truly be said the awful contrast—it is precisely as rigid in its application to human life as it ever was. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further : " no, though thou art burning to grasp just one fact more, and that fact, duly located in the storehouse of truth, remains—eternally remains—whether thou know it or not.

Isidore. Vanity and vexation ! Then let the cynic rule the hour. "Eat and drink : for to-morrow we die."

Alexis. Happily the practice of the cynic does not always go along with his creed : at least a sense of moral obligation will frequently be found underlying the professions even of the atheist.

Isidore. Perhaps so ; but if the theory which bids us live for pleasure only, obtains sometimes where the practice does not, conversely you will find abundance of mortals living the epicurean life who do profess to believe in a hereafter.

Alexis. What men who simply follow the inclination of the senses may do or profess I am scarcely concerned to say, nor am I in any way syllogizing on the "Evidences." I only wish to point out the impressions forced, as it seems to me, on man's moral consciousness by an unbiassed view of his position in this life relatively to the obvious—duties I will not call them, for that may be begging the question ; but high and animating interests which appeal to his intellectual nature and invite his agency. Reverting to what I said just now about Finality being the accepted framework of thought in the Middle Ages generally, it is curious to observe how the first inklings of natural philosophy would immediately bring into the foreground this bugbear of the shortness of life, as though by the irrepressible force of the contrast. Roger Bacon, that half mythical prototype of his great namesake, after descanting on the wonderful discoveries and inventions which he had either realized or guessed, passes to schemes for the prolongation of life as the crowning aim of human industry, and believes confidently in their success, though he owns the utmost they could do would be to extend by some years the term to which destiny had irrevocably fixed certain outside limits. Somewhat similar to the consciousness of our own days in this respect must have been, I should imagine, that of the sixteenth century ; the age of maritime discovery, of enfranchised thought, of romantic anticipation.

Isidore. Yes, there was a powerful shifting then of the fences of Finality

in most things. I can quite believe how forcibly the sense of *disappointment* you have been describing must have addressed itself to such minds as Francis Bacon's, Raleigh's, Shakspeare's. How they must have panted to keep a little longer abreast of the world's advance !

Alexis. To Bacon's and Raleigh's, no doubt ; but again, I must say, not in quite the same manner to Shakspeare's. Raleigh must have yearned to know what the New World would contribute to the history and welfare of humanity ; Bacon must have felt almost a *right* to witness the progressive revelations of inductive science.

Isidore. Shakspeare, perhaps you think, guessed all things by intuition.

Alexis. No ; but Shakspeare's was not pre-eminently an *inquiring* mind. His was the imagination which dwells among old familiar facts, and brings to light the mystery and the glory of what all men, even the commonest, already know and feel. To Shakspeare, perhaps, death, as the highest poetical fact of all, might have had an interest and a charm without which human nature, viewed in its imaginative aspects, would have been incomplete,—the epic poem without its climax ; the tragedy, or comedy, without its fifth act.

Isidore. Ah ! what would one give to know the visions which opened upon that many-windowed soul, when the irremediable sense of failure came over his vital powers after the last convivial bout at Stratford !

Alexis. Azrael, we may be sure, had an ineffable smile for him ! To discoverers, on the other hand, whether in science or politics—to all whose special impulse it is to investigate or adjust the conditions of existence here below—death is purely an interruption, an anomaly ; truly the “ blind fury, with the abhorred shears.” Here is the stronghold of the pietists. This world is not your home, they say, therefore care not for it ; live apart from its concerns. The next world is the only reality ; despise things present, and pass on.

Isidore. And if you refuse the scientific philosopher or the cynic the right to solve life's problem, will you deny that the pietist at least is right ? Better make friends at once with the scythe-and-hour-glass visitor, since we cannot dismiss him from our doors. Better wrap ourselves in sack-cloth all day long, and hold ourselves ready for our grave.

Alexis. The only answer to which is, as it is to the plea of the cynics, what a world would this be if all men so acted ! In the case of the pietists, a world of ignorance and squalidity, in which even Ignatius Loyolas and Hindoo fakirs would find it difficult to live. But, in fact, pietists themselves, we shall find, lay comparatively little stress on the shortness of individual life ; they have ever preferred to predict the end of the world, for this they know is a more certain damper to secular energies. Obstinate mortals *will* care for the interests of this accustomed stage while there is a succession of human beings to carry on the tradition ; but if the world itself vanishes into nothing, then indeed—

Isidore. Then indeed, having their tents burned behind them, the travellers to the New Jerusalem have no temptation to look back or falter

in their onroad. Well, if only to lessen their regret at having to make this sacrifice of the present to the future, it may be natural that each indication of fulfilled prophecy should be caught at as proving the advent of a new heaven and new earth. But the propensity may arise from nobler motives—from impatience for a more perfect state of things.

Alexis.

So trust the men, whose best hope for the world
Is ever that the world is near its end,
Impatient of the stars that keep their course,
And make no pathway for the coming judge—

says our latest—perhaps our most distinguished—poetess. Anticipation leads to nothing. We must simply take the conditions of our being as we find them; and the pietists, to my mind, weaken the moral of Finality by rebuking one side of human nature and forbidding its outgrowth. The full grandeur of the Supreme is only felt when we are entirely conscious of the vastness, as well as of the limitations of human capacity. I have sometimes thought, however, that the fanatical dream of the Fifth Monarchy men in Cromwell's time really grew out of their ardour to reform the social and political state of England in their time. I mean, that in their burning zeal for more just and equal conditions among men, they came to anticipate a new avatar of the deity as the readiest and most certain method of securing these objects, and of reconciling the reforming instincts of man, and his innate desire to perpetuate the work of his brain and hands, with the doctrines of his religion.

Isidore. To make it *worth while*, in fact, for a Christian to be busy about the affairs of this world at all?

Alexis. Just so. The belief on which Vano and his associates acted was that their schemes of Church Reform and Chancery Reform were actually leading up to the Utopian polity of the saints.

Isidore. Well, whether they have dreamt Fifth Monarchy dreams or not, you will allow that the most devout and excellent of God's servants have ever been those who have done most to make this world a place of comfortable habitation for others.

Alexis. All the while preaching that sorrow and privation are best for man; that comfort is a snare, and ease a delusion. This is one of the oddest among the many odd contradictions of human nature.

Isidore. But, again, may not the beneficent pietist say, Improve the individual socially and intellectually here, and you give him the better chance of becoming fit for an eternity in heaven?

Alexis. If so, I repeat, he contradicts his other, or ascetic, theory; a theory which, to their honour be it said, pietists are much more prone to enforce against themselves than against their fellow-creatures. But it is obviously nothing short of hypocrisy to pretend this as the motive for the philanthropic legislation of modern times. We labour because there is a surpassing fascination of interest in making the conditions of our present existence as noble as may be, in adorning, or only extending, its

little span. To take mere every-day instances : what are our hospitals and our "homes" for but to preserve those in life for whom we profess to believe that death would be the greatest of gains ?

Isidore. And who *must* go their way, like the rest of mankind, after their seventy or eighty years are over. That is true. We do, indeed, live in a mass of contradictions. Our irrepressible interest in making the world bright and comfortable belies the pietist ; the brevity of life confutes the worldly philosophers. I really believe the Fifth Monarchy men must have been happiest in their way of viewing the matter. But facts went so woefully against them. It was by no means the reign of the saints that was coming on the earth in the latter part of the seventeenth century, but only the very unsaintly reign of Charles II. What say you to the modern Millenarians ?

Alexis. The Millenarians are too vague, or rather their images of a kingdom of the Redeemer on earth are too transcendental, have too little reference to the actual politics and philanthropies of men, to meet the point under consideration. Their favourite programme would snap the thread of secular progress altogether.

Isidore. There is yet another way of viewing the matter—that of the Comteist. The Comteist finds refuge in his worship of Humanity. If the world's progress can only be realized by each unit of mankind for a limited period in extent, at least for Humanity in its collective life, for the great onward-surging wave of aggregate existence, there is hope and stability ?

Alexis. The Comteists would drag a man's soul upwards with a rope made of sand. Their attempt to invest a verbal abstraction with the attributes of Divinity is surely more futile than any task of Tantalus.

Isidore. Nevertheless, short of praying to Humanity, or to the memories of any of its representatives—which I grant seems a perverse confounding of grammatical tenses, to say the least—Humanity, I take it, means something, whether in Comteist philosophy or in common sense.

Alexis. Yes. If individual human life is fragmentary and disappointing, then Humanity in the gross means a great many such fragments and disappointments—nothing more. Humanity can never rise above the jog-trot business of living its seventy or eighty years, eating, drinking, and sleeping through boyhood, manhood, and old age. As to making a god of its nobler qualities, why, the workman in Isaiah who fashioned one out of the trunk of a tree, after warming himself and cooking his food with the remainder of the material, hit upon quite as brilliant an idea.

Isidore. Still, if, as you admit, the world's advancement is a worthy aim, even in matters which have positively no reference to another stage of being, then a good man should be so disinterested that this thought will be quite sufficient to soothe him in passing for ever from its atmosphere.

Alexis. The question is not whether he will be soothed or not, but what the effect must needs be on his reason and moral sense. Here am I, he will think, feeling a giant will within me to combat difficulties and

increase man's resources on earth, yet am I utterly unable to give either to my life or to his life that permanence which alone can render it logically worth while to spend time and thought in the endeavour. *What* is it, who is it, that steps in and whirls away me and those that come after me as inexorably as my foot crushes the reptile intent on building up his little ant-heap in my path? A power it must needs be. And can any power be lord over man's purposes and genius save One that takes up all purpose and all genius into itself, and knows the secret of reconciling what *we* cannot reconcile,—life's brevity with life's value and self-contained interest? Such a power implies eternity; and eternity is vast enough to find answers for every riddle,—ay, and to find congenial occupation, perchance, for the faculties that have been furnished up on the needs of this poor planet of ours.

Isidore. Which planet, by the way, will soon be left in twilight dimness, for see, the sun is setting.

Alexis.—

Sie rückt und weicht, der Tag ist überlebt,
Dort eilt Sie hin, und fördert neues Leben.

Isidore.

O dass kein Flügel mich vom Boden hebt
Ihr nach und immer nach zu streben!

What a flood of crimson and gold glinting through the branches of those elm-trees!

Alexis. Alas! Urbanus has, in his conservatism, let those elm-trees grow till they leave us little space for beholding sunset or anything else beyond them. He, at least, has not been anxious to change the world's institutions out of zeal for futile adjustments. And, viewed on one side of the question, he is doubtless right; it is scarcely worth while: in half an hour the sunset glow is over and we go indoors and retire to bed.



Colonial Parliaments.

BEFORE proceeding to do what is the chief purpose of this paper, namely, to give the reader some idea of the actual everyday working of parliamentary government in the colonies, it may be well to describe, briefly, the constitutions of the principal settlements. With Mr. Merivale's exhaustive work to refer to, no intelligent Englishman need plead ignorance on this subject; but as probably few persons not immediately interested in colonial politics have studied those essays, a few words of explanation may be desirable.

In Canada, the leading North American colony, responsible government has been established since 1846. Under this system the colony is ruled by a Governor, whose assent is necessary to every legislative measure before it can come into force, and with whom rests the distribution of patronage, and the general representation of the Crown. He is advised by an Executive Council, or Cabinet of Ministers, all of whom are responsible to the legislature, and by being outvoted on any vital question can be turned out of office. It follows, as a matter of course, that Ministers must also be elected by the people. The legislature, or local parliament, in all the Canadian colonies comprises two houses, the upper one being usually styled Legislative Council, and the lower, House of Assembly. In some cases, the Crown, through the Governor, has nominated the former, as it does still in the case of many West Indian colonies. In most instances, however, the upper house is composed of members possessing a far higher property qualification than is necessary for the lower and popular assembly. Where the Crown nominates, however, the qualification may refer only to age and nationality. Canada presents the only instance of a confederated group of British colonies. It now possesses, over and above the parliaments of its several provinces, a federal parliament, by which all matters pertaining to the common interests of the whole, such as defence, fiscal regulations and finance, are considered and determined. Thus a "dominion" has been constituted, not unlike, in some respects, its great republican neighbour, and for all practical purposes as free and self-reliant.

All the Australian colonies are governed by responsible Ministers, who come in and go out at the pleasure of legislative majorities, and very variable that pleasure seems to be to the mind of distant observers. Of the five great provinces of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, the two last appear to be the least subject to ministerial changes. New Zealand, owing to its natural

peculiarities, differs somewhat from any other group of colonies. It is divided into nine different provinces, each being internally managed by a Superintendent and a Provincial Council of at least nine members. These, however, merely control the affairs of the district. There is a General Assembly, composed of the Governor, a Legislative Council, and a Representative Assembly. To this government has lately been intrusted the entire control of the native population.

We have to go to the West Indies in order to find relics of the old type of constitution, but even amongst those beautiful but slowly advancing islands the representative principle has edged itself into most of the governments. Trinidad is one of the exceptions. There the Legislative Council consists of six official and six non-official members, all of whom are nominated by the Crown. St. Lucia, together with Turk's and Caicos Islands, are under the same form of rule. But in no case is responsible government established. The councils of advice by whom the Governors are assisted, called "Administrative," "Executive," or "Privy," as the case may be, are all nominated by the Crown, and hold their seats at pleasure. These restricted concessions of representative government are compatible with the needs and the social structure of those mixed communities, made up in great part as they are of coloured people. Jamaica, the oldest and most important of the British West Indies, enjoyed, until the other day, one of the most liberal constitutions possessed by any of the islands, but, as we all know, the force of events has led to its withdrawal, and to the substitution of a much simpler system.

The vast South African settlements are behind the world in political development, as they are in material progress. In 1852 a "popular" constitution was granted to the Cape Colony, and it has remained in force, unaltered, ever since. It is peculiar in providing for two purely elective houses of representatives without at the same time conceding any measure of responsibility. The Governor's Executive Council consists exclusively of officers appointed by the Crown, who hold their posts during pleasure. From time to time the expediency of introducing responsible government has been mooted and discussed. But the Cape people are slow and conservative, and have so far desisted from praying for any change, although they have probably only to ask in order to get it. Natal, which as a colony is wholly independent of the Cape, is also ruled by a Governor and an irresponsible Executive Council. It has a small Legislative Council, three-fourths of whose members are elected by the people. This colony, too, has so far abstained from asking for larger powers of self-government. One or two detached Eastern dependencies may be placed in this group. The populous and wealthy island of Mauritius, despite the rare activity of its agricultural interests and its commercial importance, is smitten by no political aspirations. It rests content with its small nominee legislature of seventeen members, only ten of whom are unofficial, while they are selected by the Governor

from the landed proprietors of the island, "and submitted to her Majesty in Council for approval and confirmation." In Ceylon the government is administered in just the same way, the proportion of unofficial nominee members being only, however, as six to nine. An agitation is at present going on there in favour of a more popular form of government. Hong Kong, and all the West Coast African settlements, come into the same category. In all of them the ignorant coloured classes far outnumber the white people, and as, if I mistake not, no direct legislation has yet made colour a bar to the exercise of the franchise, it is obvious that responsible government in such cases would be somewhat dangerous.

It is a mistake to suppose that universal suffrage goes hand in hand with responsible government. Victoria and South Australia are the only colonies where the ballot is in full operation; electors have in other cases to possess a property qualification. The nature and amount of this differ according to circumstances. In Jamaica, before the insurrection, electors were required to be freeholders to the extent of 6*l.* a year, or pay 20*l.* a year as rent, or have an annual income of 50*l.*, or pay 1*l.* taxes yearly, or hold 100*l.* as a bank deposit. In Natal the qualification is 50*l.* freehold or 10*l.* annual rental, and the same suffices for a member. In the Canadian provinces the qualification is much the same. In South Australia a freehold of 50*l.* annual value, or a leasehold of 20*l.* annual value, or 25*l.* rental, qualify to vote for members of the Legislative Council. For the House of Assembly, however, all registered electors, being naturalized subjects, are entitled to vote. In New Zealand electors must possess a freehold estate worth 50*l.*, or a leasehold worth 10*l.* a year, or be a householder paying a clear annual rental not less than 5*l.* a year. In the Cape colony the qualification of electors for both Houses is an annual income of 50*l.*, or of 25*l.* with board and lodging. These facts will suffice to show that, with one or two exceptions, the franchise in our colonies is by no means so democratic as many people believe it to be.

Having glanced at the electors let us look at the members of colonial parliaments, and see how they do their work. People in England can scarcely be too indulgent to these colonial senators. English legislators have a set course to walk in; tried principles and precedents to guide them; six centuries of political history to inform their minds and influence their action. Colonial legislators have literally a wilderness before them to traverse and to civilise; they have no forerunners to appeal to, no rule, no example. The House of Commons consists for the most part of men born, or fitted for the posts they fill. The colonial parliament in most cases is made up of men who are still working in one way or another for a livelihood, who were seldom educated with any view to law-making, who often have to sacrifice private interests to the duties they have undertaken. The English senate counts its members by the hundred, and amongst them are men who devote themselves to particular branches

of legislation or subjects of debate ; they are helped, moreover, by all the extraneous aids of old and efficient officers, counsel, libraries, and sources of reference. The colonial legislature seldom can boast of more than 100 members. That of Canada, before the federation, had 180 members ; New South Wales has 72 ; the Cape Colony, 68 ; Victoria, 60 ; South Australia, 86 ; New Zealand, 58 ; Queensland, 82 ; Natal, 16 ; and the West Indian colonies in proportion. I refer here to the lower houses only ; the upper houses, of course, contain much fewer members. Upon the shoulders of these small assemblies is placed all the burden of making laws for a new country.

And a new country, it must be remembered, requires legislation specially adapted to its needs. It cannot import wholesale and ready-made the jurisprudence of another country—far older, far more populous, other in all respects than itself. As a rule the common law of England is quoted in all colonial courts ; but the circumstances and necessities of most of our dependencies differ so much from those of England, and the social structure of colonial communities is so different, that distinct statutes on almost every subject have come to be enacted. In some colonies two or three distinct systems or sets of law exist side by side. In all the South African colonies, for instance, Roman Dutch law is the common law of the land ; but the statute law created during the last few years is largely impregnated with the spirit of modern English jurisprudence. In Natal the legal machinery is yet more complex. There, in addition to Roman Dutch common law and colonial statute law, administered and practised by English judges and English lawyers, is a form of *lex non scripta* known as Kafir law. Wherever colonies have been conquered from other European nationalities—as in the cases of Canada and Mauritius—contrarieties must be found. It will be easily understood that under such circumstances the task of legislation is unusually difficult.

Then, again, a new country requires much for it that has been done and settled long ago in old countries. None but a colonist can fairly estimate the “wants” of a young and thriving colony. The case of a legislature just beginning its work in a lately occupied land is much the same as that of the settler in it. He has nothing before him but a bare—not even that if it be bush-land—piece of ground. He has to provide shelter upon it, to inclose it, to plough it, to irrigate it, to plant it, and make a road to it. So it is with the little parliament. The young state wants a good deal more than mere laws. Its harbour, the gateway of its commerce, has to be made accessible ; roads have to be formed, often through dense forests, across deep morasses, or over rugged hills ; buildings are required for use as court-houses, prisons, offices, and places of defence ; a postal system has to be established ; police have to be organized, and in some cases a system of protection devised. All these purposes—and they are the bare necessity of any civilised community, however poor or small—call for money. Revenue,

therefore, must be provided, and this, perhaps, is the hardest of all the legislative tasks ; for, great as are the needs of the country, its paying capacity is lamentably small. Men go to colonies to make fortunes, not to spend them ; and in the earlier years of these settlements most colonists find it difficult to live in anything like comfort ; and yet revenue must be provided. The consequence is that a customs' establishment is formed, stamp-duties imposed, taxes levied, and a fiscal system created. Speaking generally, customs' dues yield at least a third of most colonial revenues ; land in several instances contributes largely ; stamps are liberally drawn upon ; but few direct taxes are imposed. The British tax-payer, who considers himself a sorely burdened person, often grumbles at the demands made upon his pocket ; and yet he only contributes at the rate of 2*l.* 18*s.* per head, while some colonies are taxed at the rate of 6*l.* per head. No colony, I believe, is taxed, counting heads, so little as Great Britain ; but you hear comparatively little complaint on this score, and the popular belief in England is that the tax-gatherer is one of the nuisances from which colonists are free. Nor can it be said that taxation presses as heavily upon people in the colonies as upon people at home. Far from it. The former are better able to pay taxes ; the taxes themselves are seldom offensive ; and, lastly, the tax-payer gets a more tangible return for his outlay than he does in England. He feels that the money paid to government is all expended upon works or services that are necessary to the progress and well-being of the country ; and he knows that it is in his power, through the medium of the legislature, at any time to demand an account of moneys raised by taxation, or to diminish the burdens imposed upon the community. Nevertheless, although this facility of raising revenue, caused by the readiness of colonists to bear a considerable per-centage of taxation, may seem to lighten the responsibilities of the legislator, it requires no small amount of financial husbandry to find funds sufficient for the clamorous wants of the colony. The power of granting or stopping supplies is the chief function of all popular colonial legislatures. At first it is not uncommon to see this power used rather lightly. Before the novelty of self-government has worn away, the young parliament has generally tried its "prentice hand" at this exciting but dangerous game. Should a Governor prove unyielding or antagonistic, it is usually sought to coerce him by rejecting the Supply Bill. When this is done the public expenditure required for the carrying on of government has to be disbursed under the Governor's treasury warrant, and thus an unpleasant responsibility is thrown upon him. This is a situation, however, that seldom occurs, although the weapon is a potent one in the hands of an opposition.

Perhaps no service under the Crown requires so many positive and exceptional qualifications as the post of Colonial Governor. That functionary holds many of the relations of royalty without its absolute supremacy. He represents his sovereign, but is at the same time a

servant and dependant. He stands between two fires. On the one side are ranged the Crown and its advisers, with whom rest solely all his chances of promotion in a service where the openings are few and the risks are many. On the other side are the colonists and their representatives, whose confidence and goodwill it is his first object to win, but whose views and interests are often directly opposed to the policy he has to carry out. Imagine the tact and diplomacy that are needed during times of popular agitation, to avoid giving offence to the colonists without losing favour at home.

Having said thus much about the public aspects and constitutions of colonial parliaments, let me try to describe more minutely the way in which they conduct their business. It is a notable fact that, from the least to the greatest, all of these now-born senates strive to copy closely the forms and usages of the home Parliament. The House of Commons is the model common to them all. Their rules and orders are based upon those in force at St. Stephen's: their ceremonies can be traced to Westminster. In the case of Canada, and the larger Australian colonies, the legislatures are a very fair imitation too. At Ottawa and Melbourne there are houses of parliament which would not discredit a European capital. These fine buildings have their halls of assembly, their lobbies, committee-rooms, refreshment-rooms, and reporters' apartments. Members of colonial assemblies are as a rule far more comfortably seated than are English M.P.'s. In the larger bodies much state and formality is kept up. The Speaker is robed and bewigged; the officers of the house are in costume; and there is a mace. Parliamentary language is strictly exacted: members are all "honourable," and the mention of a name is the sole right of an outraged speaker. The profoundest respect is required from the public: privilege is scrupulously enforced. In this respect colonial legislatures are, naturally enough, disposed to go to great lengths. It is not long since an Australian assembly kept the printer of a too censorious newspaper in durance vile for some little time.

The colonist is not always a radical or democrat; if possessed of any property, he is most often a decided conservative. It is suggestive to watch the career of a man as he rises in the world in those distant states. When he starts in his new sphere he is radical enough, and is pretty sure to be an anti-government man; as he goes on he acquires property, and as his property increases his radicalism abates, until at last the democrat becomes a downright Tory. The process is simple and explicable enough, and it seems to me that politicians at home might study to some advantage the effect which property, education, and position produce among people who, before they migrated, may have been wanting in one, or another, or all of these blessings.

For knowledge of parliamentary life in its crudest and primitive form, you must go, not to Victoria or Canada, but to one of the smaller colonies, where the assemblies boast fewer members, and less splendour. In the one I am most familiar with, a general election is looked forward to as

affording a chance of excitement. If party spirit runs high, so much the better fun. Candidates are not nominated in public as at home, but are first requested, in writing, to stand for such and such a constituency. This requisition, if signed by a sufficient number of electors, is nomination enough. As these documents have to be lodged with the respective magistrates a certain number of days prior to the day of election, exciting scenes now and then occur when candidates arise at the eleventh hour. It is usual for candidates to make known their political creed in the form of a published address, and in due time to appear before a public meeting, when they sometimes receive hard treatment. Canvassing a constituency, say of a hundred and fifty voters scattered over a district as large as Yorkshire, is no light, though it may be a simple matter. As many of the electors live out of the reach of inns, the would-be member has often to claim the hospitality of those whose votes he is soliciting. It will thus be seen that colonial senators are generally known in person to most of their constituents. And here I may make a brief digression by way of pointing out one of the unpleasant conditions of public life in colonies. Where "everybody knows everybody," private and personal matters enter largely into public relationships. It is not as it is at home. Journalists are dealt with, not as impersonal exponents of public opinion, but as men and neighbours, whose individual qualities, domestic surroundings, and private circumstances are brought to bear, either in the place of, or as adding force to, arguments used in the course of controversy. Members of parliament, and all men placed in the position of public representatives, suffer a like exposure. Likes and dislikes that have nothing to do with questions at issue, or with actual fitness for office, too often govern criticism of public action. In colonies, and especially the smaller ones, all men are brought into constant contact with each other; all are familiar with the daily concerns of their neighbours. This state of things must necessarily interfere with a fair and impartial judgment of men and measures, and is unquestionably the most objectionable feature of colonial life.

When the day of a contested election arrives it is heralded in the towns by the display of flags and rosettes, and in the country by the setting forth at the polling-places of solid viands for the refreshment of tired and hungry voters. It is common for each candidate to provide an open table for all comers. These hospitalities are dispensed without much reference to the colours worn by those who enjoy them. Political purists may object to them as one form of bribery, but they cannot be fairly regarded in that light. Most country voters have to ride greater or lesser distances before they can record their votes; and it would be deemed a shabby return for their time and trouble to let them go back hungry and thirsty. There is perhaps too much drinking on these occasions, but it is difficult to see how the evil can be prevented.

Many amusing incidents occur at these elections. Where candidates

are well matched the voting often runs very close, and the constituencies are so small in point of numbers that every vote is of moment. As the hour draws near for the closing of the poll excitement gets intense : horses are despatched twenty or thirty miles to fetch lagging voters ; special messengers come tearing in on foaming horses from the other polling-places, for in county elections persons are allowed to vote in their own ward or district. I recollect one case in which the numbers remained evenly balanced during the three days' duration of the poll. At the close of the poll at the central point one candidate was left, reckoning up the latest returns from the other places, in possession of a clear majority. Only one more return was wanted, and that was not thought likely to affect the result. Congratulations were showered upon the successful man : he was cheered and complimented : speeches were demanded of him : he was in a glow of self-complacency ; at last, as darkness was setting in, the clatter of hoofs was heard along the road. All eyes were bent upon the eager messenger. When he rode up, hot and panting, he shouted out the respective numbers he had to disclose. This final return left the expected victor just one below his rival !

When the time for opening the session has arrived, the members leave their ploughs, their flocks, their stores, their offices, possibly their workshops, and proceed to the capital. Some of them—the single men, to wit—will amble thither on horseback. The time of meeting (I speak now of one colony in particular) is usually during the glorious winter months, with bright skies and cool breezes day after day. Pleasant work is it to ride through a long journey at this season : little fear of bad weather disturbs the mind : in the morning you start betimes, as the sun appears above the clear hilly horizon. The road, dry and perhaps dusty, stretches ahead over great swelling heights, where not a trace of verdure yet is visible : winter grass-fires have swept the country and blackened the landscape. Under a dull sky the scene would be dismal enough, but the contrast of the dark earth with the blue overhead ; the crimson bunches of the drooping amaryllis, which springs up from the ashes of the burnt pastures ; the gleam of granite precipices, and the shimmer, now and then, of running waters, give a peculiar charm to the darkened face of nature. If it be late in the winter, the hills and downs are clothed with vivid green, and spangled by innumerable flowers. If it be early in the season, the long nights are lit up by the blaze of linked and ever twisting grass-fires, which take all imaginable lines, as they sweep over the hills, to be quenched, at last, in some wider stream, or stopped by a bare belt of road.

Much as the horseman enjoys his journey at such a time, the family man, who has to travel by ox-waggon, may enjoy his trip as much. He journeys at the rate of fifteen miles a day, reading, shooting, botanising on the way. Then he has the busy camp-work of the night, the jovial gathering round the blazing fire, the solemn gleam of the stars through the tent door or from behind the waggon-flap.

In due time the members have all reached their goal, and, dressed in their best, they hie to their senate-chamber, to be addressed by the Queen's deputy.

Let me describe that hall of legislation, whose every plank and rafter—I cannot say pillar and panel—are familiar to me through long years of contemplation. Imagine a square, thatched, whitewashed building of one storey, with three great staring windows on either side of a big double door, and you have the presentment of this parliament house before you. It was built before British occupation, by a Dutch community of Puritan principles; and it looks the Roundhead to the life, the thatch being cropped close all round, with scarcely an indication of eaves. In front of this uninviting barn—for it is nothing more—one or two companies of her Majesty's troops are drawn up. Their band is in attendance; their tattered colours flutter in the breeze, their coats are as spotless, their belts as white, their weapons as burnished, as though they were under review in Hyde Park. A large and motley crowd is gathered without. Sturdy English colonists from the country come in "to see the Council opened," and to see too how their new member deports himself: huge, heavy, listless Dutchmen; brisk and dapper citizens, to whom the sight is no novelty; laughing and chattering natives, with a sprinkling of Hindoos and a swarm of small boys, compose the most orderly and well-behaved mob. We enter a "lobby," on either side of which is a small room, eighteen feet square, whereof one is the "clerks' room," and the other is committee-room, library, refreshment-room and waiting room, all in one. Those are the only two apartments in the building besides the council-chamber. That solemn meeting-place is now thronged with gaily-dressed ladies—"the fashionable world" of the young colony—who crowd the galleries and fill benches placed round the seats of the members themselves. The room is a bare, cool apartment, with whitewashed walls and no ceiling, the roof being open to the thatch. Round a horseshoe table are ranged fifteen arm-chairs. In this respect colonial legislators are better off than Members of the House of Commons. They have set seats of their own, and a writing-table. On a dais at the upper end is placed the Speaker's chair, now covered with a kaross, and overhung by a rude shield bearing the royal arms.

The noise of cannon is heard: therefore we know that the viceregal cortège has left Government House on its way down. Soon from the side rooms the members file in and take their places. Such as have the right to wear a uniform appear in character. Lawyers wear their gowns; one clerical member appears in a robe; the gown of a bachelor-of laws clothes one distinguished figure. The Speaker comes forth in ordinary costume, robe and wig not being yet indulged in. A sound as of arms being grounded is heard, and then the "National Anthem" is struck up by the band, accompanied by a feeble cheer. A minute longer, and the Governor, the representative of royalty, enters, in Windsor uniform, and attended by a brilliant military and official staff. At his entrance the whole assembly

rise, and stand until bidden to be seated. Having received a ponderous manuscript from the hands of his private secretary, his Excellency then delivers his opening speech. This address is seldom so brief and flavourless as are royal speeches elsewhere. It seems to have had more for its model the "message" of an American president. It usually takes at least half an hour to deliver, and enters fully into the state of the country and the questions of the day. These productions are oftentimes marked by considerable ability. As soon as the speech is read, the Governor, who has been seated all the time, hands it to the Speaker, bows, and departs. And thus the ceremonial ends.

The first work of the session is to prepare a reply to the speech. This is done by a select committee, and until the document has been presented and debated little other business goes on. The "House," as it fondly calls itself, meets twice a week during the early afternoon, and three times a week at seven o'clock in the evening. There being no chaplain, prayers are always read by the Speaker, generally to a bare quorum. Concerning the business of the House, it is enough to say that it is conducted in strict accordance with the parliamentary practice of England: these young legislatures cling with rare tenacity to the customs and guidance of their forefathers. May's *Parliamentary Practice* is the textbook of every member. Burke's *Precedents* holds the place of honour at the right hand of the Speaker. It will be easily understood that there is frequent recourse to both these authorities. On the whole, however, the amenities of parliamentary life are pretty well preserved. In cases of disputed procedure and personal altercation, as well as generally in carrying on the work of the House, the want of experience and of precedent causes no little inconvenience and loss of time. Sometimes difficulties occur for which the records of the home Parliament supply no remedy. Such an one arose last year. The Speaker had gone on an expedition into the far interior: his travels took him further than he had contemplated, and brought him to a district where, when the winter came, his cattle were left without grass, and it was impossible for them to return. He had no horses within reach; his sole dependence for means of conveyance was upon ox-waggons, and they could not be moved. Thus came it to pass that when the session arrived there was no Speaker, and a deputy had to be appointed. The matter was not much considered, as the absence of the Speaker was expected to be but brief. Weeks passed on, however, and the missing man came not, nor was any tidings of him received. At last, a fortnight before the session closed, he suddenly arrived, having made all speed from the far frontier where horses became obtainable. He resumed his seat and made his explanation. One or two members, however, seemed to think that the Speaker should have taken more pains to inform the council of his movements, and raised a question as to the legality of their late proceedings. Precedents were sought for; May was overhauled; *Hansard* was exhausted; but the long record of the English Parliament failed to

supply an analogous case, or to lay down any rule of action for such an emergency. The possibility of such an occurrence as a Speaker being left out of the reach of posts in the wilderness had never presented itself to the minds, or happened within the experience, of English Parliament writers. Only one course remained. An Act had to be passed legalising the proceedings of the council during the Speaker's absence.

In the little assembly I now speak of what are known as "scenes" seldom take place. In its earlier years they were more common, but of late the behaviour of members has been singularly sedate; far too much so in fact for the public taste. Liberal accommodation is provided for visitors, more than half the room being given up to them. In a town where there are no regular places of amusement the debates of a public assembly offer some attractions, and whenever a question of special interest is coming on, or whenever a "row" is expected, the galleries are crammed. The ladies find much enjoyment on the latter occasions, and are by no means satisfied with the dull good temper in fashion now. Of course now and then a man of low character, or a violent partisan, will find his way into the House, and do his best at times to convert that arena into a bear-garden. Such men, however, soon find their level, and their gambols being met with contempt or indifference, they are gradually given up.

Although the franchise is so low in all colonies as to admit almost every resident to a participation in it, electors as a rule choose the best man within their reach. It often happens that the large property-holders decline to accept a seat in the legislature, and thus it is that professional and commercial men,—lawyers, doctors, journalists and merchants,—are more fully represented than any other class. One small assembly consists at this moment of two planters, five farmers, one storekeeper, one land-owner, one merchant, one retired captain, and one newspaper editor. With regard to the first two classes, it must be explained that men of good birth and high attainments often have that designation in colonies. For instance, one of those I have named as "farmers" is an accomplished Oxford man of considerable ability. A colonial "farmer" means the owner of many thousand acres, who may have fallen back, perhaps, upon bucolic pursuits after a life of military or intellectual action in Europe. I think I may safely and truthfully say of all colonists, that they feel much personal pride in the reputation of their legislative bodies, and with few exceptions—and there are such undoubtedly—choose for their representatives men who, by their known capacities and social position, are best fitted for the office.

In the assembly I have more particularly referred to, the arts of oratory are not much practised. It is no easy matter to become rhetorical in a chamber consisting of fifteen unenthusiastic men seated far apart round a horse-shoe table. Burke no doubt found it hard sometimes to speak as he did to the thin Houses which we are told he had often to address. How much worse must it be for men who have none of

his fine afflatus, and whose auditors are not more numerous than a small dinner-party. But debates are none the less wordy. Colonial legislators like to hear themselves talk, and occasionally a burst of real eloquence is heard as the spirit moves some more ambitious member to attempt an upward flight.

Most of the real work of the House is done, as at home, by committees. At least a dozen of these are generally engaged at the same time in taking evidence concerning or reporting upon the leading questions of the day. When it is remembered that all this work is imposed upon fifteen men, without the Speaker, and that there are always some absent or idle members, it will be seen that the post of a colonial legislator is no sinecure. While the session lasts, members who stick to their work are occupied more or less all the day, and to a late hour at night. The committees meet in a small bare room, whose pleasantest feature is an open fireplace, a mere cavity in the wall, disclosing a hearth, where at night a great log-fire roars and blazes, and a large tin boiler supplies tea and coffee for the members. Many a soothing pipe, many a cheerful cigar, have been smoked in that room. There, after many a fierce debate, have contending members drowned their squabbles in a comfortable cup of coffee.

Ajaccio.

It generally happens that visitors to Ajaccio pass over from the Cornice coast, leaving Nice at night, and waking about sunrise to find themselves beneath the bare and frowning mountains of Corsica. The difference between the scenery of the island and the shores which they have left is very striking. Instead of the rocky mountains of the Cornice, intolerably dry and barren at their summits, but covered at their base with villages and ancient towns and olive-fields, Corsica presents a scene of solitary and peculiar grandeur. The highest mountain-tops are covered with snow, and beneath the snow-level to the sea they are as green as Irish or as English hills, but nearly uninhabited and uncultivated. Valleys of almost Alpine verdure are succeeded by tracts of chestnut wood and scattered pines, or deep and flowery brushwood,—the “*macchi*” of Corsica, which yields shelter to its traditional outlaws and bandits. Yet upon these hill-sides there are hardly any signs of life ; the whole country seems abandoned to primeval wildness and the majesty of desolation. Nothing can possibly be more unlike the smiling Riviera, every square mile of which is cultivated like a garden, and every valley and bay dotted over with white villages. After steaming for a few hours along this savage coast the rocks which guard the entrance to the bay of Ajaccio, murderous-looking teeth and needles ominously christened *Sanguinari*, are passed, and we enter the splendid land-locked harbour, on the northern shore of which Ajaccio is built. About three centuries ago the town, which used to occupy the extreme or eastern end of the bay, was removed to a more healthy point upon the northern coast, so that Ajaccio is quite a modern city. Visitors who expect to find in it the picturesqueness of Genoa or San Remo, or even of Mentone, will be sadly disappointed. It is simply a healthy, well-appointed town of recent date, the chief merits of which are that it has wide streets, and is free, externally at least, from the filth and rubbish of most southern seaports.

But if Ajaccio itself is not picturesque, the scenery which it commands, and in the heart of which it lies, is of the most magnificent. The bay of Ajaccio resembles a vast Italian lake—a *Lago Maggiore*, with greater space between the mountains and the shore. From the snow-peaks of the interior, huge granite crystals clothed in white, to the southern extremity of the bay, peak succeeds peak and ridge rises behind ridge in a line of wonderful variety and beauty. The atmospheric changes of light and shadow, cloud and colour, on this upland country are as subtle and as various as those which lend their beauty to the scenery of the lakes, while the sea below is blue and rarely troubled. One could never get tired with

looking at this view. Morning and evening add new charms to its marvellous sublimity and beauty. In the early morning Monte d'Oro sparkles like a Monte Rosa with its fresh snow, and the whole inferior range puts on the crystal blueness of dawn among the Alps. In the evening violet and purple tints and the golden glow of Italian sunset add a new lustre to the fairy-land. In fact, the beauties of Switzerland and Italy are curiously blended in this landscape.

The soil and vegetation of the country round Ajaccio differs very much from that which one is accustomed to on the Cornice. There are very few olive-trees, nor is the cultivated ground backed up so immediately by stony mountains; but between the sea-shore and the hills there is plenty of space for pasture-land, and orchards of apricot and peach trees, and orange-gardens. This undulating country, green with meadows and watered with clear streams, is very refreshing to the eyes of Northern people, who weary of the bareness and greyiness of Nico or Mentone. It is traversed by excellent roads, recently constructed on a plan of the French Government, which intersect the country in all directions, and offer an infinite variety of rides or drives to visitors. The broken granite of which these roads are made is very pleasant for riding over. Most of the hills through which they strike after starting from Ajaccio are clothed with a thick brushwood of box, ilex, lentisc, arbutus, and laurustinus, which stretches down irregularly into vineyards, olive-gardens, and meadows. It is indeed the native growth of the island; for wherever a piece of ground is left untilld, the "macchi" grow up, and the scent of their multitudinous aromatic blossoms is so strong that it may be smelt miles out at sea. Napolcon, at St. Helena, referred to this fragrance when he said that he should know Corsica blindfold by the smell of its soil. Occasional woods of holm oak make darker patches on the landscape, and a few pines fringe the side of inclosure walls or towers. The prickly pear runs riot in and out among the hedges and upon the walls, diversifying the colours of the landscape with its strange grey-green masses and unwieldy fans. In spring, when peach and almond trees are in blossom, and when the roadside is starred with asphodels, this country is most beautiful in its gladness. The macchi blaze with cistus flowers of red and silver. Golden broom mixes with the dark purple of the great French lavender, and over the whole mass of blossom wave plumes of Mediterranean heath and sweet-scented yellow coronilla. Under the stems of the ilex peep cyclamens, pink and sweet; the hedgerows are a tangle of vetches, convolvuluses, lupins, orchises and alliums, with here and there a purple iris. It would be quite impossible to describe all the rare and lovely plants which are found here in a profusion that surpasses even the flower-gardens of the Cornice, and reminds us of the most favoured Alpine valleys in their early spring.

Since the French occupied Corsica they have done much for the island by improving its harbours and making good roads, and endeavouring to mitigate the ferocity of the people. But they have many things to contend against, and Corsica is still far behind the other provinces of

France. The people are idle, haughty, umbrageous, fiery, quarrelsome, fond of gipsy life, and retentive through generations of old feuds and prejudices to an almost inconceivable extent. Then the nature of the country itself offers serious obstacles to its proper colonization and cultivation. The savage state of the island and its internal feuds have disposed the Corsicans to quit the seaboard for their mountain villages and fortresses, so that the great plains at the feet of the hills are unwholesome for want of tillage and drainage. Again, the mountains themselves have in many parts been stripped of their forests and converted into mere wildernesses of *macchi* stretching up and down their slopes for miles and miles of useless desolation. Another impediment to proper cultivation is found in the old habit of what is called free pasturage. The highland shepherds are allowed by the national custom to drive down their flocks and herds to the lowlands during the winter, so that fences are broken, young crops are browsed over and trampled down, and agriculture becomes a mere impossibility. The last and chief difficulty against which the French have had to contend, and up to this time with apparent success, is brigandage. The Corsican system of brigandage is so very different from that of the Italians, Sicilians, and Greeks, that a word may be said about its peculiar character. In the first place it has nothing at all to do with robbery and thieving. The Corsican bandit took to a free life among the *macchi*, not for the sake of supporting himself by lawless depredation, but because he had put himself under a legal and social ban by murdering some one in obedience to the strict code of honour of his country. His victim may have been the hereditary foe of his house for generations, or else the newly made enemy of yesterday. But in either case, if he had killed him fairly, after a due notification of his intention to do so, he was held to have fulfilled a duty rather than to have committed a crime. He then betook himself to the dense tangles of evergreens which we have described, where he lived upon the charity of country-folk and shepherds. In the eyes of those simple people it was a sacred duty to relieve the necessities of the outlaws, and to guard them from the bloodhounds of justice. There was scarcely a respectable family in Corsica who had not one or more of its members thus *alla campagna*, as it was euphemistically styled. The Corsicans themselves have attributed this miserable state of things to two principal causes. The first of these was the ancient bad government of the island: under its Genoese rulers no justice was administered, and private vengeance for homicide or insult became a necessary consequence among the haughty and warlike families of the mountain villages. Secondly, the Corsicans have been from time immemorial accustomed to wear arms in everyday life. They used to sit at their house-doors and pace the streets with musket, pistol, dagger, and cartouch-box on their persons; and on the most trivial occasion of merriment or enthusiasm they would discharge their fire-arms. This habit gave a bloody termination to many quarrels, which might have ended more peaceably had the parties been unarmed, and so the seeds of *vendetta* were constantly being sown.

Statistics published by the French Government present a hideous picture of the state of bloodshed in Corsica even during this century. In one period of thirty years (between 1821 and 1850) there were 4,810 murders in the island. Almost every man was watching for his neighbour's life or seeking how to save his own; and agriculture and commerce were neglected for this grisly game of hide-and-seek. In 1858 the French began to take strong measures, and, under the *Préfet Thuillier*, they hunted the bandits from the *macchi*, killing between 200 and 800 of them. At the same time an edict was promulgated against bearing arms. It is forbidden to sell the old Corsican stiletto in the shops, and no one may carry a gun, even for sporting purposes, unless he obtains a special licence. These licences, moreover, are only granted for short and precisely measured periods.

In order to appreciate the stern and gloomy character of the Corsicans it is necessary to leave the smiling gardens of Ajaccio, and to visit some of the more distant mountain villages—Vico, Cavo, Bastelica, Bocognano or Corte, any of which may easily be reached from the capital. Immediately after quitting the seaboard we enter a country austere in its simplicity, solemn without relief, yet dignified by its majesty and by the sense of freedom it inspires. As we approach the mountains the *macchi* become taller, feathering, man-high above the road, and stretching far away upon the hills. Gigantic masses of granite, shaped like buttresses and bastions, seem to guard the approaches to these hills; while, looking backward over the green plain, the sea lies smiling in a haze of blue among the rocky horns and misty headlands of the coast. There is a stateliness about the abrupt inclination of these granite slopes, rising from their frowning portals by sharp *arêtes* to the snows piled on their summits, which contrasts in a strange way with the softness and beauty of the mingling sea and plain beneath. In no landscape are more various qualities combined; in none are they so harmonized as to produce so strong a sense of majestic freedom and severe power. Suppose that we are on the road to Corte, and have now reached Bocognano, the first considerable village since we left Ajaccio. Bocognano might be chosen as typical of Corsican hill-villages, with its narrow street, and tall tower-like houses of five or six stories high, faced with rough granite, and pierced with the smallest windows and very narrow doorways. These buildings have a mournful and desolate appearance. There is none of the grandeur of antiquity about them; no sculptured arms or castellated turrets, or balconies or spacious staircases, such as are common in the poorest towns of Italy. The signs of warlike occupation which they offer, and their sinister aspect of vigilance, are thoroughly prosaic. They seem to suggest a state of society in which feud and violence were systematized into routine. There is no relief to the savage austerity of their forbidding aspect; no signs of wealth or household comfort; no trace of art, no liveliness and gracefulness of architecture. Perched upon their coigns of vantage, these villages seem always menacing, as if Saracen pirates, or Genoese marauders, or bandits bent on vengeance, were still for

ever on the watch. Forests of immensely old chestnut-trees surround Bocognano on every side, so that you step from the village streets into the shade of woods that seem to have remained untouched for centuries. The country-people support themselves almost entirely upon the fruit of these chestnuts; and there is a large department of Corsica called Castigniccia, from the prevalence of these trees and the sustenance which the inhabitants derive from them. Close by the village brawls a torrent, such as one may see in the Monte Rosa valleys of Piedmont or the Apennines, but very rarely in Switzerland. It is of a pure green colour, foaming round the granite boulders, and gliding over smooth slabs of polished stone, and eddying into still deep pools fringed with fern. Monte d'Oro, one of the largest mountains of Corsica, soars above, and from his snows this purest water, undefiled by glacier mud or the *débris* of avalanches, melts away. Following the stream we rise through the macchi and the chestnut woods, which grow more sparsely by degrees, until we reach the zone of beeches. Here the scene seems suddenly transferred to the Pyrenees; for the road is carried along abrupt slopes, thickly set with gigantic beech-trees, overgrown with pink and silver lichens. In the early spring their last year's leaves are still crisp with hoar-frost; one morning's journey has brought us from the summer of Ajaccio to winter on these heights. Snow-drifts stretch by the roadside, and one by one the pioneers of the vast pine-woods of the interior appear. A great portion of the pine-forest (*Pinus larix*, or Corsican pine, not larch, as Dr. Bennet has miscalled them in his book on the Mediterranean climate) between Bocognano and Corte has recently been burned by accident. Nothing can be more forlorn than the black leafless stems and branches emerging from the snow. Some of these trees are mast-high, and some mere saplings. Corte itself is built among the mountain fastnesses of the interior. The snows and granite cliffs of Monte Rotondo overhang it to the north-west, while two fair valleys lead downward from its eyrie to the eastern coast. The rock on which it stands rises to a sharp point, sloping southward, and commanding the valleys of the Golo and the Tavignano. When we remember that Corte was the old capital of Corsica, and the centre of General Paoli's government, we are led to compare the town with Innsprück, Meran, or Grenoble. In point of scenery and situation it is scarcely second to any of these mountain cities; but its poverty and bareness are scarcely less striking than those of Bocognano.

The whole Corsican character, with its stern love of justice, its furious revengefulness and wild passion for freedom, seems to be illustrated by the peculiar elements of grandeur and desolation in this landscape. When we traverse the forest of Vico or the rocky pasture-lands of Niolo, the history of the Corsican national heroes, Giudice della Rocca and Sampiero, becomes intelligible; nor do we fail to understand some of the mysterious attraction which led the more daring spirits of the island to prefer a free life among the macchi and pine-woods to placid lawful occupations in farms and villages. The lives of the two men whom we have mentioned are so

prominent in Corsican history and are so often still upon the lips of the common people, that we may perhaps be allowed to sketch their outlines in the foreground of the *Salvator Rosa* landscape which we have described. Giudice was the governor of Corsica, as lieutenant for the Pisans, at the end of the thirteenth century. At that time the island belonged to the republic of Pisa, but the Genoese were encroaching on them by land and sea, and the whole life of their brave champion was spent in a desperate struggle with the invaders, until at last he died, old, blind, and in prison, at the command of his savage foes. Giudice was the title which the Pisans usually conferred upon their governor, and Della Rocca deserved it by right of his own inexorable love of justice. Indeed justice seems to have been with him a passion, swallowing up all other feelings of his nature. All the stories which are told of him turn upon this point in his character; and though they may not be strictly true, they illustrate the stern virtues for which he was celebrated among the Corsicans, and show what kind of men this harsh and gloomy nation loved to celebrate as heroes. While a young man, Giudice was attached to a very beautiful woman, who treated him much as Dalilah treated Samson, and finally shut him up in prison and mocked him. Giudice effected his escape, gathered his friends together, and took his perfidious mistress captive. The revenge which he inflicted upon her for her want of faith is too terrible to mention here. But it shows how passionately powerful was the sense of justice in his heart, how the remembrance of injury and wrong could drown all other feelings even for the woman that he loved. On another occasion after a victory over the Genoese, he salted the eyes of his slain enemies and sent them in a barrel to Genoa, with a message that the captives in his hands should be released if their wives and sisters came to sue for them. The Genoese ladies embarked and arrived in Corsica, and to Giudice's nephew was entrusted the duty of fulfilling his uncle's promise. In the course of executing his commission the youth was so smitten with the beauty of one of the women that he dishonoured her. Thereupon Giudice had him at once executed. Another story shows the Spartan justice of this hero in a less savage light. He was passing by a cowherd's cottage, when he heard some young calves bleating. On inquiring what distressed them, he was told that the calves had not enough milk to drink after the farm people had been served. Then Giudice made it a law that the calves throughout the land should take their fill before the cows were milked.

Sampiero belongs to a later period of Corsican history. After a long course of misgovernment the Genoese rule had become unbearable. There was no pretence of administering justice, and private vengeance had full sway in the island. The sufferings of the nation were so great that the time had come for a new judge or saviour to rise among them. Sampiero was the son of obscure parents who lived at Bastelica. But his abilities very soon declared themselves, and made a way for him in the world. He spent his youth in the armies of the Medici and of the French Francis,

gaining great renown as a brave soldier. Bayard became his friend, and Francis made him captain of his Corsican bands. But Sampiero did not forget the wrongs of his native land while thus on foreign service. He resolved, if possible, to undermine the power of Genoa, and spent the whole of his manhood and old age in one long struggle with their great captain, Stephen Doria. Of his stern patriotism and Roman severity of virtue the following story is a terrible illustration:—Sampiero, though a man of mean birth, had married an heiress of the noble Corsican house of the Ornani. His wife, Vannina, was a woman of timid and flexible nature, who, though devoted to her husband, fell into the snares of his enemies. During his absence on an embassy to Algiers the Genoese induced her to leave her home at Marseilles and to seek refuge in their city, persuading her that this step would secure the safety of her child. She was starting on her journey when a friend of Sampiero arrested her, and brought her back to Aix, in Provence. Sampiero, when he heard of these events, hurried to France, and was received by a relative of his, who, hinted that he had known of Vannina's projected flight. "E tu hai taciuto?" was Sampiero's only answer, accompanied by a stroke of his poignard that killed the lukewarm cousin. Sampiero now brought his wife from Aix to Marseilles, preserving the most absolute silence on the way, and there, on entering his house, he killed her with his own hand. It is said that he loved Vannina passionately; and when she was dead he caused her to be buried with magnificence in the church of St. Francis. Like Giudice, Sampiero fell at last a prey to treachery. The murder of Vannina had made the Ornani his deadly foes. In order to avenge her blood, they played into the hands of the Genoese, and laid a plot by which the noblest of the Corsicans was brought to death. First, they gained over to their scheme a monk of Bastelica, called Ambrosio, and Sampiero's own squire and shield-bearer, Vittolo. By means of these men, in whom he trusted, he was drawn defenceless and unattended into a deeply wooded ravine near Cavo, not very far from his birthplace, where the Ornani and their Genoese troops surrounded him. Sampiero fired his pistols in vain, for Vittolo had loaded them with the shot downwards. Then he drew his sword, and began to lay about him, when the same Vittolo, the Judas, stabbed him from behind, and the old lion fell dead by his friend's hand. Sampiero was sixty-nine when he died, in the year 1567. It is satisfactory to know that the Corsicans have called traitors and foes to their country Vittoli for ever. These two examples of Corsican patriots are enough; we need not add to theirs the history of Paoli—a milder and more humane, but scarcely less heroic leader. Paoli, however, in the hour of Corsica's extremest peril, retired to England, and died in philosophic exile. Neither Giudice nor Sampiero would have acted thus. The more forlorn the hope, the more they struggled.

Among the old Corsican customs which are fast dying out, but which still linger in the remote valleys of Niolo and Vico, is the *Vécero*, or funeral chant, improvised by women at funerals over the bodies of the dead.

Nothing illustrates the ferocious temper and savage passions of the race better than these *vóceri*, many of which have been written down and preserved. Most of them are songs of vengeance and imprecation, mingled with hyperbolic laments and utterances of extravagant grief, poured forth by wives and sisters by the side of murdered husbands and brothers. The women who sing them seem to have lost all milk of human kindness, and to have exchanged the virtues of their sex for Spartan fortitude and the rage of furies. While we read their turbid lines we are carried in imagination to one of the cheerless houses of Bastelica or Bocognano, overshadowed by its mournful chestnut-tree, on which the blood of the murdered man is yet red. The *Gridata*, or wake, is assembled in a dark room. On the wooden board, called *tola*, the corpse lies stretched; and round it are women, veiled in the blue-black mantle of Corsican costume, moaning and rocking themselves upon their chairs. The *Pasto* or *Conforto*, food supplied for mourners, stands upon a side-table, and round the room are men with savage eyes and bristling beards, armed to the teeth, keen for vengeance. The dead man's musket and pocket-pistol lie beside him, and his bloody shirt is hung up at his head. Suddenly the silence, hitherto only disturbed by suppressed groans and muttered curses, is broken by a sharp cry. A woman rises: it is the sister of the dead man; she seizes his shirt, and holding it aloft with Mænad gestures and frantic screams, gives rhythmic utterance to her grief and rage. "I was spinning, when I heard a great noise: it was a gunshot, which went into my heart, and seemed a voice that cried:—Run, thy brother is dying. I ran into the room above; I took the blow into my breast; I said, 'Now he is dead, there is nothing to give me comfort. Who will undertake thy vengeance? When I show thy shirt, who will vow to let his beard grow till the murderer is slain? Who is there left to do it? A mother near her death? A sister? Of all our race there is only left a woman, without kin, poor, orphan, and a girl. Yot, O my brother! never fear! For thy vengeance thy sister is enough!

Ma per fà la to bindetta,
Sta siguru, basta anch ella!

Give me the pistol; I will shoulder the gun; I will away to the hills. My brother, heart of thy sister, thou shalt be avenged!" A *vóceru* declaimed upon the bier of Giammatteo and Pasquale, two cousins, by the sister of the former, is still fiercer and more energetic in its malediction. This Erinny of revenge prays Christ and all the saints to extirpate the murderer's whole race, to shrivel it up till it passes from the earth. Then, with a sudden and vehement transition to the pathos of her own sorrow, she exclaims:—

Halla mai bista nissunu
Tumbà l'omi pe li canti?

It appears from these words that Giammatteo's enemies had killed him because they were jealous of his skill in singing. Shortly after, she curses the curate of the village, a kinsman of the murderer, for refusing

to toll the funeral bells ; and, at last, all other threads of rage and sorrow being turned and knotted into one, she gives loose to her raging thirst for blood :—"If only I had a son, to train like a sleuth-hound, that he might track the murderer ! Oh, if I had a son ! Oh, if I had a lad !" Her words seem to choke her, and she swoons, and remains for a short time insensible. When the Bacchante of revenge awakes, it is with milder feelings in her heart. "O brother mine, Matteo ! art thou sleeping ? Here I will rest with thee and weep till daybreak." It is rare to find in literature so crude and intense an expression of fiery hatred as these untranslatable *vóceri* present. The emotion is so simple and so strong that it becomes sublime by mere force, and affects us with a strange pathos when contrasted with the tender affection conveyed in such terms of endearment as "my dove," "my flower," "my pheasant," "my bright painted orange," addressed to the dead. In the *vóceri* it often happens that there are several interlocutors : one friend questions and another answers, or a kinswoman of the murderer attempts to justify the deed, and is overwhelmed with deadly imprecations. Passionate appeals are made to the corpse : "Arise ! Do you not hear the women cry ? Stand up. Show your wounds, and let the fountains of your blood flow ! Alas ! he is dead ; he sleeps ; he cannot hear !" Then they turn again to tears and curses, feeling that no help or comfort can come from the clay-cold form. The intensity of grief finds strange language for its utterance. A girl, mourning over her father, cries :—

Mi l'hannu crucifissatu
Cume Ghiesu Cristu in croce.

Once only, in Viale's collection, does any friend of the dead remember mercy. It is an old woman, who points to the crucifix above the bier.

But all the *vóceri* are not so murderous. Several are composed for girls who died unwedded and before their time, by their mothers or companions. The language of these laments is far more tender and ornate. They praise the gentle virtues and beauty of the girl, her piety and helpful household ways. The most affecting of these dirges is that which celebrates the death of Romana, daughter of Dariola Danesi. Here is a pretty picture of the girl :—"Among the best and fairest maidens you were like a rose among flowers, like the moon among stars ; so far more lovely were you than the loveliest. The youths in your presence were like lighted torches, but full of reverence ; you were courteous to all, but with none familiar. In church they gazed at you, but you looked at none of them ; and after mass you said, 'Mother, let us go.' Oh ! who will console me for your loss ? Why did the Lord so much desire you ? But now you rest in heaven, all joy and smiles ; for the world was not worthy of so fair a face. Oh ! how far more beautiful will Paradise be now !" Then follows a piteous picture of the old bereaved mother, to whom a year will seem a thousand years, who will wander among relatives without affection, neighbours without love ; and

when sickness comes will have no one to give her a drop of water, or wipe the sweat from her brow, or hold her hand in death. All that is left for her is to wait and pray for death, that she may join again her darling.

But it is now time to return from our long digression to Ajaccio itself, and to make some mention of the advantages which it offers as a winter health station to invalids. There are many who find the air of Cannes and Nice too dry and exciting, and who are surprised, when they expect a summer in the midst of February, to be greeted with winds far colder than the easterly blasts from which they fled in England. Such persons would probably benefit from a residence at Ajaccio, where, with a splendid southern sun, and a temperature dry as well as warm, there is no irritating harshness in the air, and no sharp cutting mistral. The beauty of the scenery, and the unending variety of the excursions round Ajaccio, render it a most desirable residence for those who delight in nature, and are able to take horse or carriage exercise. The accommodation, which has hitherto been very indifferent, is rapidly improving, through the unremitting labours of the English physician, Dr. Ribton, and a German colleague, who are doing all in their power to render Ajaccio as comfortable as Cannes or Mentone. One great attraction to this place is the cheapness of lodging, food, and locomotion. During the last few winters Cannes and Mentone have become as dear as Nice, which means a little dearer than London or Paris. It is only by vigorous competition and by the multiplication of health stations in other parts that the preposterous overcharges of the Cornice hotels can possibly be beaten down.

Ajaccio does not, indeed, as yet offer many advantages of society and city life to foreigners. But visitors bring these with them; and in course of time begin to complain that they get too much of them. At present the attractions and ornaments of the town consist of a good public library, Cardinal Fesch's large but indifferent collection of pictures, two monuments to Napoleon, and Napoleon's house. It will always be the chief pride of Ajaccio that she gave birth to the great Emperor. Close to the harbour, in a public square by the sea-beach, stands an equestrian statue of the conqueror surrounded by his four brothers on foot. They are all attired in Roman fashion, and are turned seaward, to the west, as if to symbolize the emigration of this family to conquer Europe. There is something ludicrous and forlorn in the stiffness of the group,—something even pathetic, when we think how Napoleon gazed seaward, westward, from another island, no longer on horseback, no longer laurel-crowned, an unthroned, unseated conqueror, on St. Helena. His father's house stands close by. An old Italian waiting-woman, who had been long in the service of the Murats, keeps it and shows it. She has the manners of a lady, and can tell many stories of the various members of the Buonaparte family. Those who fancy that Napoleon was born in a mean dwelling of poor parents will be surprised to find so much space and elegance in these apartments. Of course his family was not rich by comparison with the riches of French or English

nobles. But for Corsicans they were well to do, and their house has an air of antique dignity. The chairs of the entrance saloon have been literally stripped of their coverings by enthusiastic visitors: the horse-hair stuffing underneath protrudes itself with a sort of comic pride, as if protesting that it came to be so tattered in an honourable service. Some of the furniture seems new; but many old presses inlaid with marbles, agates and lapis lazuli, such as Italian families preserve for generations, have an air of respectable antiquity about them. Nor is there any doubt that the young Napoleon led his minuets beneath the stiff girandoles of the formal dancing-room. There, too, in a dark back-chamber, is the bed in which he was born. At its foot is a photograph of the present Prince Imperial sent by the Empress Eugenie, who, when she visited the room, wept much—*pianse molto* (to use the old lady's phrase)—at seeing the place where such lofty destinies began. On the wall of the same room is a portrait of Napoleon himself as the young general of the Republic—with the citizen's unkempt hair, the fierce fire of the Revolution in his eyes, a frown upon his forehead, lips compressed, and quivering nostrils; also one of his mother, the pastille of a handsome woman, with Napoleonic eyes and brows and nose, but with a vacant simpering mouth. Perhaps the provincial artist knew not how to seize the expression of this feature, the most difficult to draw. For we cannot fancy that Letizia had lips without the firmness or the fulness of a majestic nature.

The whole first storey of this house belonged to the Buonaparte family. The windows look out partly on a little court and partly on narrow streets. It was, no doubt, the memory of this home that made Napoleon, when emperor, design schemes for the good of Corsica—schemes that might have brought him more honour than many conquests, but which he had no time or leisure to carry out. On St. Helena his mind often reverted to them, and he would speak of the gummy odours of the *macchi* wafted from the hill-sides to the sea-shore.

Jacob Omnium.

A FEW weeks since a life ended which was so usefully employed for the public good as to demand some such memorial as we propose to set up for it. It was an uneventful life, giving much more material for the critic than the chronicler. Matthew James Higgins was the son of Matthew Higgins, Esq., of Benown, county Westmeath, who married Miss Baillie, cousin of the Right Hon. Henry Baillie, of Red Castle, Inverness-shire. His son, Matthew James, was born at Benown in December, 1810, and was educated at Eton and New College, Oxford. In 1850 he married Emily, fifth daughter of Sir Henry Tichborne, and widow of John Benett, Esq. He died on the 14th of August last, his wife surviving him, with a son and two daughters. Little could be added to that meagre chronicle, and nothing of public interest. We are concerned not so much with Matthew Higgins as with Jacob Omnium.

When Mr. Higgins was first moved to write for the public is not quite clear; but it must be at least twenty-five years ago since he made certain contributions to the *New Monthly Magazine*, which at once attracted attention. Some of these sketches their author afterwards collected and printed for private circulation; and in so doing furnished his friends with a handy-volume of evidence that he was of the number of born essayists, and not of those who achieve literary distinction by prudence and practice. His first efforts—he himself had no over-weening opinion of them—are in essential particulars as good as his last. They have not quite the same power, nor do they exhibit that perfect discipline of word and clause which afterwards gave to “J. O.’s” columns their peculiar *military* force, and made of him, in attack, the most formidable penman in English journalism. But if these his earlier efforts are so far lacking in the comparison, what they do lack are only such advantages as may be acquired. They have at the same time all the natural adroitness, all the natural humour and penetration of his later writings; and they show beside that what he particularly excelled in—the implication of the most pungent meaning in a demure simplicity of statement—was not an acquirement, but a gift; a remarkable gift, and one that is rarely bestowed on an Englishman. Altogether, there is in these sketches the style—the touch, the tone, the happy measure of thought and word—which distinguishes the real literary faculty from all imitations, however worthy. Of observation, too, or rather of discrimination (for that is generally what is meant by the other word), there is abundant proof. It is therefore probably true, as his biographer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* has said, that but for his predilection

for the topics of the day, Jacob Omnium might long ago have secured a place amongst the standard writers of English. But capability and disposition are different things; and though Mr. Higgins had remarkable literary faculties, and used them as if he respected them, he had no merely literary ambition. He never wrote to write an article; he could not have written simply to produce a book, however great his confidence that it would be a clever and lasting one. Thus what is happily called his predilection for the topics of the day appears to have been his only stimulus to write at all. Even these earlier essays, which might naturally be expected to display the simply literary aspirations of a young writer, have the purpose, and the same *kind* of purpose, which he afterwards pushed with such excellent effect in the pages of the *Times*, of this Magazine, of the *Edinburgh Review*, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Thus the first of them, "Jacob Omnium, M.P., the Merchant Prince," might have been written after the commercial panic of 1866, in castigation of our own fraudulent directors, and in derision of their splendid vulgarities, their bumptious benevolences, and the fatal facility with which they impose upon people who would be shocked to imagine themselves easy to dazzle or delude. "Mr. Z. the Eminent Horse-Dealer," and "Horse-Buyers and Horse-Dealers," have precisely the purpose of much of "J. O.'s" later work; and "The Wild Sports of Middlesex" is a perfect example of the way in which his lively humour, and an irony that dropped like milk and bit like vitriol, were employed to shame vicious follies out of existence. "The Father of the Fancy," and "Animal Magnetism"—the latter a charmingly humorous little paper—have also for motive that impatience of cruelty to animals which he constantly manifested to the end of his life: in fine, of the nine brief papers comprised in the volume, half-a-dozen are obviously not so much the efforts of a literary aspirant as of a social reformer. From this it would appear that we probably lost little by Mr. Higgins's predilection for the topics of the day; while our gain in him was that same predilection, exercised with a literary skill rarely excelled in our time. The satisfaction of pricking a bubble, the pleasure of redressing a wrong or abolishing an abuse, called faculties into play which otherwise might have been seldom employed, if at all; and it was a distinction that marked his whole character in various ways that he had as ready a hand for a little abuse as for a great one.

For Jacob Omnium was often engaged in weightier affairs than are generally included in the phrase "topics of the day;" and he did other good work besides what may be done in reviews and newspapers. Thus when the Irish famine was at its worst, Mr. Higgins was amongst those who took the risks of turmoil, of fever, of over-work amongst the wretched creatures who lay dying and dead in hundreds of villages; and there are those who remember still what industry, what sagacity, temper, and kindness he exhibited in that trying time and in those dreadful scenes. To which let us add, as an illus-

tration of his readiness to help in all things, little or great, that at one time he got himself made a parish guardian, in order to try what might be done by honest and quick-witted gentlemen in that post, instead of abandoning the management of parochial affairs and the poor to tradesmen often ignorant and indifferent, and just as often attracted to parish work by parish jobbing alone. Another significant fact is that for many years and till quite recently he was a contented employer of negroes who were contented with their master. From his father he inherited estates in Demerara; these he took care to visit more than once; and he so ordered affairs, or affairs were so beneficently ordered for him, that his relations with his black servants abroad (overseers and all, they were of one colour) were as comfortable as those with his white servants at home: so he always declared whenever the question of negro labour was discussed in his presence. How far he was fitted for the public service in Parliament, his defeat in 1847 when he stood for Westbury on Peelite principles, and his determination to make no second effort for a seat, leave us imperfect means of judging. Certainly he had many advantages for a Parliamentary career. He was rich and well connected, as the phrase is; he had a magnificent presence, engaging manners, admirable temper; and his voice was singularly clear and sweet, with the very note of frankness and courage in it. Whether he had the special faculty of making speeches is unknown; but if remarkable lucidity in conversation, an apt and racy choice of language, sparkle in anecdote, terseness in narrative, be acceptable evidence, then there is reason to think that Jacob Omnium might have been an efficient and even powerful debater. And all these important attributes were added to the sagacity, the inquiry, the wit and force and polish so abundantly displayed in his writings. With such a character, and such predilections, and such advantages, it seems scarcely questionable that he would not only have "succeeded" in Parliament, but would have done enormous good there. He himself, perhaps, doubted whether his habit of lashing out against anything that to him was a proveable folly or wrong might not bring upon himself too much personal discomfort in the crowded area of St. Stephen's: all the more that in such matters he was utterly careless of persons, and could only have been subdued by party considerations to his own mortification. Besides, men in office have no love for such critics and reformers as are mercilessly regardless of the inconvenience they may cause to particular men or sets of men, when once their minds are bent upon the exposure of an abuse or the punishment of an evil; and of such critics and reformers "J. O." certainly was one. The same unflinching temper, joined to a special aptitude and delight for getting at particulars, would probably have made him intolerable to the gentlemen of more than one public department which demands precisely such a head as his; nor would his inflexibility have been less irritating for the unfailing courtesy of language and manner which distinguished him in personal discussion, as much as his adroitness did. But though he would have created much discomfort amongst poor-law officials, for

instance, hatred amongst the noble army of guardians, and dread in the minds of Treasury whips, who cannot endure to have parish people offended, he would have made of that department of administration a very different and far less scandalous thing than late years have shown it to be. For Matthew Higgins was by no means what is called a Quixotic reformer. He was as safe as he was courageous. It would be as much a mistake to think of him as a sentimentalist as to talk of him as a pigmy. He was, in fact, an eminently business-like man—cautious, painstaking, and capable of dealing candidly with facts as well as with men. Without such qualities, indeed, he could never have earned so thoroughly as he did the peculiar praise bestowed upon him, by one who obviously knew him well, in the journal already quoted:—"In the brilliant and versatile writer, with half-a-dozen controversies on his hands, not a few of a large circle of acquaintance found a friend in need, a counsellor in difficulty, a comforter in affliction. His habit of looking below the surface and getting to the bottom of things, and his long practice in weighing evidence of all kinds, often enabled him to settle disputes and effect reconciliations." Let any one acquainted with the world ask himself what manner of man is commonly chosen by those amongst whom he lives to settle disputes and effect reconciliations, and he will find in the answer our own description of Mr. Higgins's character; though of course, those with whom he had the misfortune to differ, and who generally 'got very much the worst of the difference, may be inclined to dispute its accuracy. Such a man must have tact, shrewdness, benevolence, candour, and, above all, must have succeeded in convincing his friends of a clear uncompromising sense of justice. And of such material was Matthew Higgins made up;—this, together with his humour and his intellectual force and grace, was what we all so long admired as "Jacob Omnium."

He was a young man when he commenced the kind of work he was born to, and he carried it on with unabated vigour and pleasure to the last days of life. His mind was as fresh, as strong, as alert at fifty-eight as it had been at forty. In the long interval between his first appearance in the *New Monthly Magazine* and his association with a knot of kindred spirits in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, he wrote first for the *Morning Chronicle*, speedily making himself felt there. Afterwards, for more than twenty years, he was one of the most constant, and certainly one of the most powerful, contributors to the *Times*: indeed, it is doubtful whether that journal could boast of another mind so influential or so useful for its nobler purposes. He also wrote, as we have said, for the *Edinburgh Review*; and his contributions to this Magazine were frequent. The good that he accomplished in these various ways was very great. We have only to recall his various signatures—"Jacob Omnium," "J. O.," "Paterfamilias," "Civilian," "West Londoner," "A Belgravian Mother," "A Thirsty Soul," "A Mother of Six," "John Barleycorn," "Providus," and a dozen victories over folly, cruelty, disorder, jobbery, and all manner

of mal-administration and abuse, are at once remembered. His first achievement of importance was the abolition of the Palace Court; his latest a most necessary and complete revolution of idea as to what our great public schools are and ought to be. In the interval there was scarcely a department of Government that had not given him occasion for unsparing criticism, which rarely failed of its aim; and he found many a little evil in our social affairs for exposure and abolition. It is very significant of his power and address that Mr. Higgins succeeded in arresting attention as well under a strange signature as under one that was familiar. We all know what the prestige of a name and of success means in matters of this kind. Over and over again Mr. Higgins proved that no such prestige was necessary for him. As soon as under the name of "Civilian" he opened fire upon War Office and Horse Guards, public attention was hvd upon the quarrel, and "Civilian" was as much applauded as "J. O." had been. So it was when he wrote under the signature "West Londoner;" and so "Paterfamilias" ranged behind him at once a degree of public support which forced inquiry, spite of the stoutest opposition, into the condition and management of our public schools. It is true, no doubt, that to the initiated in London, to officials, journalists, and club men, Jacob Omnium was revealed under every disguise; but the mass of the public have no such discrimination:—they simply recognized the sound sense, courage, and justice of "Civilian" or "Paterfamilias," cheered him on to the attack accordingly, and in most cases loyally carried him through to the achievement of his end.

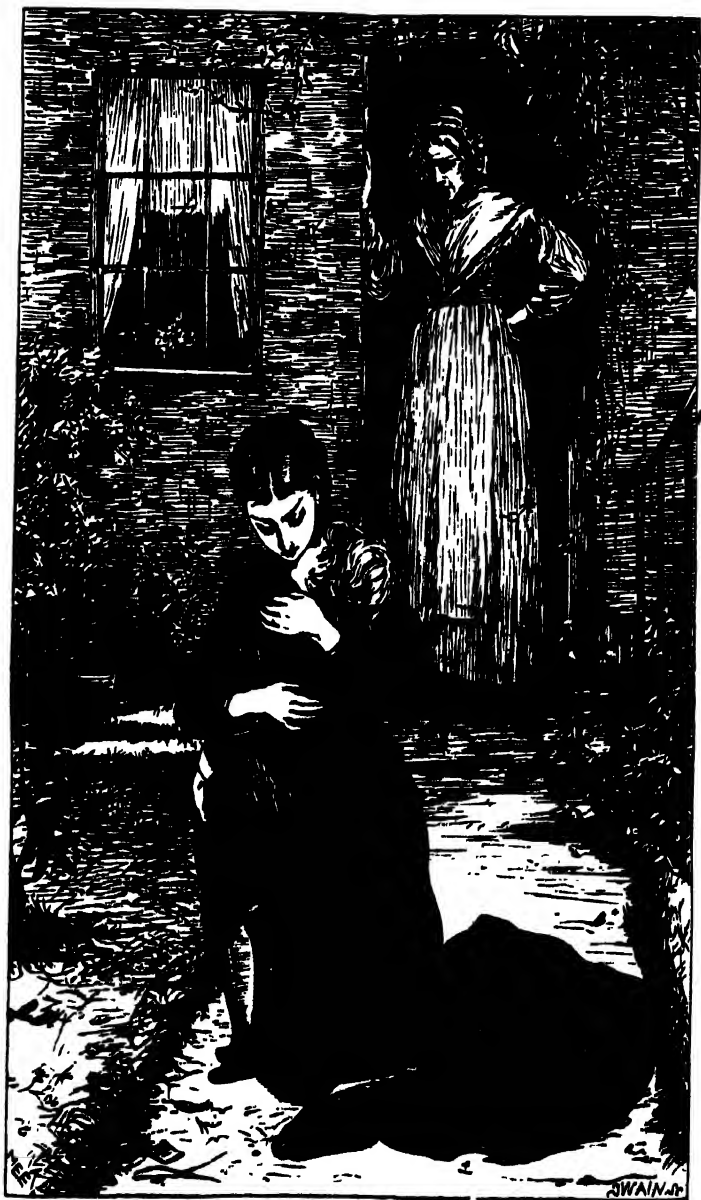
At length, and after twenty years of intimate labour with the chiefs of the *Times*, he quarrelled with that journal. No: that journal quarrelled with him. There arose an occasion of fatal necessity, in which the *Times*, in order to perform with sufficient completeness a change of opinion imperatively demanded by the humour of the day, had to fall foul of "J. O." himself, scorning him as a malignant slanderer for what had been cordially printed in its own pages. Hurt and astonished, Mr. Higgins asked for an explanation; the answer was equally rude and astonishing; and Jacob Omnium had no more to do with the *Times*. All this arose out of the famous Crawley case, in which it may be that Mr. Higgins was wrong, though it is impossible that the *Times* should be quite irreproachable, seeing that it took both sides of the controversy. But whether the *Times* was first wrong and then right, or first right and then wrong, about that noisy and most suspicious matter, its conduct towards "J. O." was entirely indefensible. As to the merits of the Crawley Court-Martial case itself we express no opinion, and as to Mr. Higgins's part in it maintain this only: that few men are always right in matters of opinion; that "J. O." was not of the miraculous few, probably; but that he approached no subject without as careful an examination of the circumstances as he could make, or with any other motives than those of honesty and justice.

From what is known of him as a public writer, it might fairly be

inferred that Mr. Higgins was a very busy man; bustling, perhaps; or what is called energetic in aspect, carriage, and manner. In fact, he was precisely the contrary of this. Above all things a man of society, he very contentedly spent much of his time as such men do; at his club, in the drawing-room, reading, riding, lounging in the company of his friends; and wherever he appeared, there was seen a well-bred, handsome Englishman, who used to be known abroad, so little bellicose or cynical was he, as the "Gentle Giant." As has been said of him already, "there were few pursuits in which English gentlemen commonly indulge with which he had not some acquaintance or sympathy. He loved literature, art, society, politics, and sport;" and it might have been added that he found almost as much pleasure in one as in another. He had a fine taste, a keen discernment for the fitting and the proper, and he knew well, and well knew how to observe, the measure of respect due to others. In short, he was in all his social relations what his constant friend Thackeray would have called a courteous and honest gentleman.

Such as he was, he died on the 14th of August of the present year, the fifty-eighth of his existence. His decease was sudden in this regard, that it was quite unexpected from the general condition of his health. For some time, indeed, he had been troubled with rheumatism, and it was noticed by some whose regard for him made them particularly observant, that he showed now and then a certain depression of spirit, not altogether to be explained by the apparent state of his health. Maybe he recurred to the common experience that men of his gigantic stature—he was six feet eight inches high—do not often attain to very old age; and that this gave importance in his mind to what otherwise would have seemed an inconsiderable derangement of health. And up to this time, too, he had maintained a remarkable degree of vigour. His hair had become almost white—at fifty-eight—but his clear grey eyes, the freshness of his face, his free gait, and, more than all, the unhampered play of his thought and the sparkle of his language, were such tokens as are found in men twenty years his junior: and not always then. Gigantic as was his form, it had not to the last any sign of infirmity. On the contrary, it had so much the look of youth—of youth even—that its fine proportions would have graced a man of thirty. In this apparent vigour of body, in this unquestionable freshness and vigour of mind, he died—through incautious bathing during the dangerous heats of our last summer.

Having come to that statement, we have little heart even for panegyric, well deserved as it is. He died: and the *Times* recorded his death in three or four simple lines, sternly repressive of every symptom of regret.



WITH MY MOTHER

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1868.

That Boy of Horcott's.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRIAL.



SOME years ago there was a trial in Dublin, which, partly because the parties in the cause were in a well-to-do condition of life, and partly because the case, in some measure, involved the interests of the two conflicting Churches, excited considerable sensation and much comment.

The contention was the right to the guardianship of a boy whose father and mother had ceased to live together. On their separation they had come to a sort of amicable arrangement that the child—then seven years old—should live alternate years with each; and though the mother's friends warmly urged her not to

consent to a plan so full of danger to her child, and so certain to result in the worst effects on his character, the poor woman, whose rank in life was far inferior to her husband's, yielded, partly from habit of deference to his wishes, and more still because she believed, in refusing these terms, she might have found herself reduced to accept even worse ones. The marriage had been unfortunate in every way. Sir Roger Newcott had accompanied his wife—the Dragoness, to Ireland.

where some violent disturbances in the south had called for an increase of military force. When the riots had been suppressed, the troops, broken up into small detachments, were quartered through the counties, as opportunity and convenience served; Norcott's troop—for he was a captain—being stationed in that very miserable and poverty-stricken town called Macroom. Here the dashing soldier, who for years had been a Guardsman, mixing in all the gaieties of a London life, passed days and weeks of dreary despondency. His two subs, who happened to be sons of men in trade, he treated with a cold and distant politeness, but never entered into their projects, nor accepted their companionship; and though they messed together each day, no other intimacy passed between them than the courtesies of the table.

It chanced that while thus hipped, and out of sorts, sick of the place and the service that had condemned him to it, he made acquaintance with a watchmaker, when paying for some slight service, and, subsequently, with his daughter, a very pretty, modest-looking, gentle girl of eighteen. The utter vacuity of his life, the tiresome hours of barrack-room solitude, the want of some one to talk to him, but, still more, of some one to listen—for he liked to talk, and talked almost well—led him to pass more than half his days and all his evenings at their house. Nor was the fact that his visits had become a sort of town scandal without its charm for a man who actually pined for a sensation, even though painful; and there was, too, an impertinence that, while declining the society of the supposed upper classes of the neighbourhood, he found congenial companionship with these humble people, which had a marvellous attraction for a man who had no small share of resentfulness in his nature, and was seldom so near being happy as when flouting some prejudice or outraging some popular opinion.

It had been his passion through life to be ever doing ~~or~~ ^{or} saying something that no one could have anticipated. For the pleasure of ~~attaining~~ ^{attaining} the world, no sacrifice was too costly; and whether he rode, or ~~shot~~, or played, or yachted, his first thought was ~~notoriety~~. An ~~enormous~~ fortune lent considerable aid to this tendency; but every year's extravagance was now telling on his resources, and he was forced to draw on his ingenuity where before he needed but to draw on his banker.

There was nothing that his friends thought less likely than that he would marry, except that, if he should, his wife would not be a woman of family: to bowl over both of these beliefs together, he married the watchmaker's daughter, and Mary Owen became a baronet's bride.

Perhaps—I'm not very sure of even that—her marriage gave her one entire day of unbroken happiness—I do not believe it gave her a week, and I know it did not a month. Whether it was that his friends were less shocked than he had hoped for, or that the shock wore out soother, he was frantic at the failure of his grand coup, and immediately set about revenging on his unhappy wife all the disappointment she had caused him. After a series of cruelties,—some of which savoured of madness, but which

she bore without complaint, or even murmur,—he bethought him that her religious belief offered a groundwork for torment which he had hitherto neglected. He accordingly determined to make his profession to the Church of Rome, and to call on her to follow. This she stoutly refused; and he declared that they should separate. The menace had no longer a terror for her. She accepted whatever terms he was pleased to dictate; she only stipulated as to the child, and for him but to the extent we have already seen. The first year after the separation the boy passed with his father; the second he spent with his mother. At the end of the third year, when her turn again came round, Sir Roger refused to part with him; and when reminded of his promise, coarsely replied that his boy, above all things, must be a gentleman; and that he was now arrived at an age when association with low and vulgar people would attach a tone to his mind, and a fashion to his thoughts, that all the education in the world would not eradicate; and that rather than yield to such a desecration, he would litigate the matter to the last shilling of his estate. Such was the cause before the Barons of the Exchequer: the mother pleading that her child should be restored to her; the father opposing the demand, that the mother's habits and associates were not in accordance with the prospects of one who should inherit title and fortune; and, last of all, that the boy was devotedly attached to him, and bore scarcely a trace of affection for his mother.

So painful were the disclosures that came out during the trial, so subversive of every feeling that pertains to the sanctity of the family, and so certain to work injuriously on the character of the child whose interests were at stake, that the judge made more than one attempt to arrest the proceedings and refer the case to arbitration, but Sir Roger would not agree to this. He was once more in his element, he was before the world—the newspapers were full of him, and better than all, in attack and reprobation. He had demanded to be put on the table as a witness, and they who saw, it is said, never forgot the insolent defiance of public opinion that he on that day displayed; how boldly he paraded opinions in opposition to every sense of right and justice, and how openly he avowed his principle of education to be—to strip off from youth every delusion as to the existence of truth and honour in life, and to teach a child, from his earliest years, that trickery and falsehood were the daily weapons of mankind, and that he who would not consent to be the dupe of his fellow-men, must be their despot and their persecutor. If he had the satisfaction of outraging the feelings of all in court, and insulting every sense of propriety and decorum, he paid heavily for the brief triumph. The judge delivered a most stern denunciation of his doctrines, and declared that no case had ever come before the court where so little hesitation existed as to the judgment to be pronounced. The sentence was, that, up to the age of twelve, the child was to be confided to the mother's charge: after which period, the court would, on application, deliberate and determine on the future guardianship.

"Will you leave me, Digby?" asked the father, and his lips trembled, and his cheek blanched as he uttered the words. The boy sprang into his arms and kissed him wildly and passionately; and the two clung to each other in close embrace, and their mingled sobs echoed through the now silent court. "You see, my lord, you see—" cried the father; but the boy's struggles were choking him, and with his own emotions, would not suffer him to continue. His sufferings were now real, and a murmur ran through the court that showed how public feeling was trembling in the balance. The bustle of a new cause that was coming on soon closed the scene. The child was handed over to an officer of the court, while the mother's friends concerted together, and all was over.

Over as regarded the first act of a life-long drama; and ere the curtain rises, it only remains to say that the cause which that day decided was mine, and that I, who write this, was the boy "Digby Norcott."

CHAPTER II.

WITH MY MOTHER.

My mother lived in a little cottage at a place called the Green Lanes, about three miles from Dublin. The name was happily given, for on every side there were narrow roads overshadowed by leafy trees, which met above and gave only glimpses of sky and cloud through their feathery foliage. The close hedgerows of white or pink thorn limited the view on either side, and imparted a something of gloom to a spot whose silence was rarely broken, for it was not a rich man's neighbourhood. They who frequented it were persons of small fortune, retired subalterns in the army, or clerks in public offices, and such like petty respectabilities who preferred to herd together, and make no contrasts of their humble means with larger, greater incomes.

Amongst the sensations I shall never forget, and which while I write are as fresh as the moment I first felt them—were my feelings when the car stopped opposite a low wicket, and Mr. McBride, the attorney, helped me down and said—"This is your home, Digby; your mother lives here." The next moment a pale, but very handsome young woman, came rushing down the little path and clasped me in her arms. She had dropped on her knees to bring her face to mine, and she kissed me madly and wildly, so that my cap fell off. "See how my frill is all rumbled," said I, mused as I was to such disconcerting warmth, and caring far more for my smart appearance than for demonstrations of affection. "Oh darling, never mind it," sobbed she. "You shall have another and a nicer. I will make it myself, for my own boy,—for you are mine, Digby. You are mine, dearest, ain't you?"

"I am papa's boy," said I doggedly.

"But you will love mamma too, Digby, won't you?—poor mamma, that has no one to love her, or care for her if you do not; and she

will so love you in return, and do everything for you,—everything to make you happy,—happy and good, Digby."

"Then let us go back to Earls Court. It's far prettier than this, and there are great lions over the gateway, and wide steps up to the door. I don't like this. It looks so dark and dreary,—it makes me cry." And to prove it, I burst out into a full torrent of weeping, and my mother hung over me and sobbed too; and long after the car had driven away, we sat there on the grass weeping bitterly together, though there was no concert in our sorrow, nor any soul to our grief.

That whole afternoon was passed in attempts to comfort and caress me by my mother, and in petulant demands on my part for this or that luxury I had left behind me. I wanted my nice bed with the pink curtains, and my little tool-case. I wanted my little punt, my pony, my fishing-rod. I wanted the obsequious servants, who ran at my bidding, and whose respectful manner was a homage I loved to exact. Not one of these was forthcoming, and how could I believe her who soothingly told me that her love would replace them, and that her heart's affection would soon be dearer to me than all my toys and all the glittering presents that littered my room? "But I want my pony," I cried; "I want my little dog Fan, and I want to sit beside papa, and see him drive four horses, and he lets me whip them too, and *you* won't." And so I cried hysterically again, and in these fretful paroxysms I passed my evening.

The first week of my life there was to me—it still is to me—like a dream—a sad, monotonous dream. Repulsed in every form, my mother still persisted in trying to amuse or interest me, and I either sat in moody silence, refusing all attention, or went off into passionate grief, sobbing as if my heart would break. "Let him cry his fill," said old Biddy, the maid. "Let him cry his fill, and it will do him good." And I could have killed her on the spot as she said it.

If Biddy Cassidy really opined that a hearty fit of crying would have been a good alternative for me, she ought not to have expressed the opinion in my presence, for there was that much of my father in me that quickly suggested resistance, and I at once resolved that no matter what it might cost me, or by what other means I might find a vent for my grief, I'd cry no more. All my poor mother's caresses, all her tenderness, and all her watchful care, never acted on my character with half the force or one-tenth of the rapidity that did this old hag's attempt to thwart and oppose me. Her system was, by a continual comparison between my present life and my past, to show how much better off I was now than in my former high estate, and by a travestie of all I had been used to, to pretend that anything like complaint from me would be sheer ingratitude. "Here's the pony, darlin', waitin' for you to ride him," she would say, as she would lay an old walking-stick beside my door; and though the blood would rush to my head at the insult, and something very nigh choking rise to my throat, I would master my passion, and make no reply. This demeanour was set down to sulkiness, and Biddy warmly entreated my

mother to suppress the temper it indicated, and, as she mildly suggested, "Cut it out of me when I was young"—a counsel, I must own, she did not follow.

Too straitened in her means to keep a governess for me, and unwilling to send me to a school, my mother became my teacher herself; and, not having had any but the very commonest education, she was obliged to acquire in advance what she desired to impart. Many a night would she pore over the Latin Grammar, that she might be even one stage before me in the morning. Over and over did she get up the bit of geography that was to test my knowledge the next day; and in this way, while leading me on, she acquired, almost without being aware of it, a considerable amount of information. Her faculties were above the common, and her zeal could not be surpassed; so that, while I was stumbling and blundering over *Swaine's Sentences*, she had read all Sallust's *Catiline*, and most of the *Odes* of Horace; and long before I had mastered my German declensions, she was reading Grimm's *Stories* and Auerbach's *Village Sketches*. Year after year went over quietly, uneventfully. I had long ceased to remember my former life of splendour, or, if it recurred to me, it came with no more of reality than the events of a dream. One day, indeed—I shall never forget it—the past revealed itself before me with the vivid distinctness of a picture, and, I shame to say, rendered me unhappy and discontented for several days after. I was returning one afternoon from a favourite haunt, where I used to spend hours—the old churchyard of Killester, a long-unused cemetery, with a ruined church beside it—when four spanking chestnuts came to the foot of the little rise on which the ruin stood, and the servants jumping down, undid the bearing-reins, to breathe the cattle up the ascent. It was my father was on the box, and as he skilfully brushed the flies from his horses with his whip, gently soothing the hot mettled creatures with his voice, I bethought me of the proud time when I sat beside him, and when he talked to me of the different tempers of each horse in the team, instilling into me that interest and that love for them, as thinking, sentient creatures, which gives the horse a distinct character to all who have learned thus to think of him from childhood. He never looked at me as he passed. How should he recognize the little boy in the grey linen blouse he was wont to see in black velvet, with silver buttons? Perhaps I was not sorry he did not know me. Perhaps I felt it easier to fight my own shame alone than if it had been confessed and witnessed. At all events the sight sent me home sad and depressed, no longer able to take pleasure in my usual pursuits, and turning from my toys and books with actual aversion.

Remembering how all mention of my father used to affect my mother long ago, seeing how painfully his mere name acted upon her, I forbore to speak of this incident, and buried it in my heart, to think and ruminate over when alone.

Time went on and on till I wanted but a few months of twelve, and my lessons were all but dropped, as my mother's mornings were passed

either in letter-writing or in interviews with her lawyer. It was on the conclusion of one of these councils that Mr. M^cBride led me into the garden, and seating me beside him on a bench, said, "I have something to say to you, Digby; and I don't know that I'd venture to say it, if I had not seen that you are a thoughtful boy, and an affectionate son of the best mother that ever lived. You are old enough, besides, to have a right to know something about yourself and your future prospects, and it is for that I have come out to-day." And with this brief preface he told me the whole story of my father's and mother's marriage and separation; and how it came to pass that I had been taken from one to live with the other; and how the time was now drawing nigh—it wanted but two months and ten days—when I should be once more under my father's guidance, and totally removed from the influence of that mother who loved me so dearly.

"We might fight the matter in the courts, it is true," said he. "There are circumstances which might weigh with a judge whether he'd remove you from a position of safety and advantage to one of danger and difficulty; but it would be the fight of a weak purse against a strong one, not to say that it would also be the struggle of a poor mother's heart against the law of the land; and I have at last persuaded her it would be wiser and safer not to embitter the relations with your father—to submit to the inevitable; and not improbably you may be permitted to see her from time to time, and, at all events, to write to her." It took a long time for him to go through what I have so briefly set down here; for there were many pros and cons, and he omitted none of them; and while he studiously abstained from applying to my father any expression of censure or reprobation, he could not conceal from me that he regarded him as a very cold-hearted, unfeeling man, from whom little kindness could be expected, and to whom entreaty or petition would be lost time. I will not dwell on the impression this revelation produced on me, nor will I linger on the time that followed on it—the very saddest of my life. Our lessons were stopped—all the occupations that once filled the day ceased—a mournful silence fell upon us, as though there was a death in the house; and there was, indeed, the death of that peaceful existence in which we had glided along for years, and we sat grieving over a time that was to return no more. My mother tried to employ herself in setting my clothes in order, getting my books decently bound, and enabling me in every way to make a respectable appearance in that new life I was about to enter on; but her grief usually overcame her in these attempts, and she would hang in tears over the little trunk that recalled every memory she was so soon to regard as the last traces of her child. Biddy, who had long, for years back, ceased to torment or annoy me, came back with an arrears of bitterness to her mockeries and sneers. 'I was going to be a lord, and I'd not know the mother that nursed me if I saw her in the street! Fine clothes and fine treatment was more to me than love and affection; sign on it, I was turning my back on my own mother, and

going to live with the blackguard'—she didn't mince the word—'that left her to starve.' These neatly turned compliments met me at every moment, and by good fortune served to arm me with a sort of indignant courage that carried me well through all my perils.

To spare my poor mother the pain of parting, Mr. McBride—I cannot say how judiciously—contrived that I should be taken out for a drive and put on board the packet bound for Holyhead, under the charge of a courier, whom my father had sent to fetch me, to Brussels, where he was then living. Of how I left Ireland, and journeyed on afterwards, I know nothing; it was all confusion and turmoil. The frequent changes from place to place, the noise, the new people, the intense haste that seemed to pervade all that went on, added me to that degree that I had few collected thoughts at the time, and no memory of them afterwards.

From certain droppings of the courier, however, and his heartily expressed joy as Brussels came in sight, I gathered that I had been a very troublesome charge, and refractory to the very limit of actual rebellion.

CHAPTER III.

WITH MY FATHER.

At the time I speak of, my father dwelt in a villa near Brussels, which had been built by or for *Mdme Malibran*. It was a strange, somewhat incongruous edifice, and rather resembled a public building than a private gentleman's residence. It stood in a vast garden, or rather park, where fruit and forest trees abounded, and patches of flowers came suddenly into view in most unexpected places. There were carriage-drives, too, so ingeniously managed that the visitor could be led to believe the space ten times greater than it was in reality. The whole inside and out savoured strongly of the theatre, and every device of good or bad taste—the latter largely predominating—had its inspiration in the stage.

As we drove under the arched entrance gate, over which a crowned leopard—the Norcott crest—was proudly rampant, I felt a strange throb at my heart that proved the old leaven was still alive within me, and that the feeling of being the son of a man of rank and fortune had a strong root in my heart.

From the deep reverence of the gorgeous porter, who wore an embroidered leather belt over his shoulder, to the trim propriety and order of the noiseless avenue, all bespoke an amount of state and grandeur that appealed very powerfully to me, and I can still recall how the bronze lamps that served to light the approach struck me as something wonderfully fine, as the morning's sun glanced on their crested tops.

The carriage drew up at the foot of a large flight of marble steps, which led to a terrace covered by a long verandah. Under the shade of this two gentlemen sat at breakfast, both unknown to me. "Whom have we here?"

cried the elder, a fat, middle-aged man of coarse features and stern expression; "whom have we here?" The younger—conspicuous by a dressing-gown and cap that glittered with gold embroidery—looked lazily over the top of his newspaper, and said, "That boy of Norcott's I take it; he was to arrive to-day."

This was the first time I heard an expression that my ears were soon to be well familiar to, and I cannot tell how bitterly the words insulted me. "Who were they," I asked myself, "who, under my father's roof, could dare so to call me! and why was I not styled Sir Roger Norcott's son, and not thus disparagingly 'that boy of Norcott's'?"

I walked slowly up the steps among these men as defiantly as though there was a declared enmity between us, and was proceeding straight towards the door, when the elder called out "Holloa, youngster; come here and report yourself! You've just come, haven't you?"

"I have just come," said I, slowly, "but when I report myself it shall be to my father, Sir Roger Norcott."

"You got that, Hotham, and I must say you deserved it too," said the younger in a low tone, which my quick hearing however caught.

"Will you have some breakfast with us?" said the elder, with a faint laugh, as though he enjoyed the encounter.

"No, I thank you, sir," said I, stiffly, and passed on into the house.

"Master Digby," said a smart little man in black, who for a moment or two puzzled me whether he was a guest or a servant, "may I show you to your room, sir? Sir Roger is not up: he seldom rings for his bath before one o'clock; but he said he would have it to-day earlier."

"And what is your name, pray?"

"Nixon, sir. Mr. Nixon, Sir Roger is pleased to call me for distinction sake—the lower servants require it."

"Tell me, then, Mr. Nixon, who are the two gentlemen I saw at breakfast outside?"

"The stoutish gentleman, sir, is Captain Hotham, of the Royal Navy; the other, with the Turkish pipe, is Mr. Cleremont, Secretary to the Legation here. Great friends of Sir Roger's, sir. Dine here three or four times a week, and have their rooms always kept for them."

The appearance of my room, into which Nixon now ushered me, went far to restore me to a condition of satisfaction. It was the most perfect little bedroom it is possible to imagine, and Nixon never wearied in doing the honours of displaying it.

"Here's your library, sir. You've only to slide this mirror into the wall; and here are all your books. This press is your armoury. Sir Roger gave the order himself for that breech-loader at Liège. This small closet has your bath—always ready, as you see, sir—hot and cold; and that knob yonder commands the shower-bath. It smells fresh of paint here just now, sir, for it was only finished on Saturday; and the men are coming to-day to fix a small iron staircase from your balcony down to the garden. Sir Roger said he was sure you would like it."

I was silent for a moment, a moment of exquisite reverie, and then I asked if there were always people visitors at the Villa?

"I may say, sir, indeed, next to always. We haven't dined alone since March last."

"How many usually come to dinner?"

"Five or seven, sir; always an odd number. Seldom more than seven, and never above eleven, except a state dinner to some great swell going through."

"No ladies, of course?"

"Pardon me, sir. The Countess Vander Neeve dined here yesterday; Madame Van Straaten, and Mrs. Cleremont—excuse me, sir, there's Sir Roger's bell. I must go and tell him you've arrived."

When Nixon left me, I sat for full twenty minutes, like one waking out of a trance, and asking myself, how much was real, and how much fiction, of all around me?

My eyes wandered over the room, and from the beautiful little Gothic clock on the mantelpiece to the gilded pineapple from which my bed-curtains descended—everything seemed of matchless beauty to me. Could I ever weary of admiring them? would they seem to me every morning as I awoke as tasteful and as elegant as now they appeared to me? Oh, if dear mamma could but see them! If she but knew with what honour I was received, would not the thought go far to assuage the grief our separation cost her? And, last of all, came the thought, if she herself were here to live with me, to read with me, to be my companion, as she used to be—could life offer anything to compare with such happiness? And why should not this be? If papa really should love me, why might I not lead him to see to whom I owed all that made me worthy of his love?

"Breakfast is served, sir, in the small breakfast-room," said a servant, respectfully.

"You must show me where that is," said I, rising to follow him.

And now we walked along a spacious corridor, and descended a splendid stair of white marble, with gilded banisters, and across an octagon hall, with a pyramid of flowering plants in the centre, and into a large gallery with armour on the walls, that I wished greatly to linger over and examine, and then into a billiard-room, and at last into the small breakfast-parlour, where a little table was laid out, and another servant stood in readiness to serve me.

"Mr. Eccles, sir, will be down in a moment, if you'll be pleased to wait for him," said the man.

"And who is Mr. Eccles?" asked I.

"The gentleman as is to be your tutor, sir, I believe," replied he, timidly; "and he said perhaps you'd make the tea, sir."

"All right," said I, opening the caddy, and proceeding to make myself at home at once. "What is here?"

"Devilled kidneys, sir; and this is fried mackerel. Mr. Eccles

takes oysters ; but he won't have them opened till he's down. Here he is, sir."

The door was now flung open, and a good-looking young man, with a glass stuck in one eye, entered, and with a cheery, but somewhat affected voice, called out,—

"Glad to see you, Digby my boy; hope I have not starved you out waiting for me?"

"I'm very hungry, sir, but not quite starved out," said I, half amazed at the style of man selected to be my guide, and whose age at most could not be above three or four and twenty.

"You haven't seen your father yet, of course, nor won't these two hours. Yes, Gilbert, let us have the oysters. I always begin with oysters and a glass of sauterne; and let me tell you, your father's sauterne is excellent. Not that I counsel you, however, to start with wine at breakfast. I haven't told you that I'm to be your tutor," said he, filling his glass; "and here's to our future fellowship."

I smiled and sipped my tea to acknowledge the toast, and he went on,—

"You mustn't be afraid that I'll lean too heavily on you, Digby—at least at first. My system is, never make education a punishment. There's nothing that a gentleman—mind, I say a gentleman—ought to know that he cannot acquire as easily and as pleasantly as he does field-sports. If a man has to live by his wits, he must drudge; there's no help for it. And—but here come the oysters. Ain't they magnificent? Let me give you one piece of instruction while the occasion serves: let no one ever persuade you that Colchester oysters equal the Ostend. They have neither the plumpness nor the juiciness, and still less have they that fresh odour of the sea that gives such zest to appetite. One of these days I shall ask you what Horace says of oysters, and where. You never heard of Horace—eh?"

"Yes, sir; I was reading the *Odes* when I came away."

"And with whom, pray?"

"With mamma, sir."

"And do you mean to say mamma knew Latin?"

"Yes, sir; she learned it to teach me. She worked far harder than I did, and I could never come up with her."

"Ah, yes, I see; but all that sort of learning—that irregular study—is a thing to be grubbed up. If I were to be frank with you, Digby, I'd say I'd rather have you in total ignorance than with that smattering of knowledge a mamma's teaching is sure to imply. What had you read before Horace?"

"*Cæsar's Commentaries*, sir, an *Æneid* of Virgil, two plays of Terence—"

"Any Greek?—anything of Euripides or Aristophanes, eh?" asked he, mockingly.

"No, sir; we were to begin the New Testament after the holidays; for I had just gone over the grammar twice."

"With mamma, of course?"

"Yes, sir."

He helped himself to a cutlet, and as he poured the Harvey sauce over it, it was plain to see that he was not thinking of what was before him, but employed in another and different direction. After a considerable pause he turned his eyes full upon me, and with a tone of far more serious import than he had yet used, said, "We're not very long acquainted, Digby, but I have a trick of reading people through their faces, and I feel I can trust you." He waited for some remark from me, but I made none, and he went on: "With an ordinary boy of your age—indeed, I might go farther and say with any other boy—I'd not venture on the confidence I am now about to make; but a certain instinct tells me I run no danger in trusting you."

"Is it a secret, sir?"

"Well, in one sense it is a secret; but why do you ask?"

"Because mamma told me to avoid secrets; to have none of my own, and know as little as I could of other people's."

"An excellent rule in general, but there are cases where it will not apply: this is one of them, for here the secret touches your own family. You are aware that papa and mamma do not live together? Don't flush up, Digby; I'm not going to say one word that could hurt you. It is for your benefit—I might say for your absolute safety—that I speak now. Your father has one of the noblest natures a man ever possessed; he is a prince in generosity, and the very soul of honour, and, except pride, I don't believe he has a fault. This same pride, however, leads him to fancy he can never do wrong; indeed, he does not admit that he ever made a mistake in his life, and, consequently, he does not readily forgive those to whom he imputes any disasters that befall him. Your mother's family are included in this condemned list—I can't exactly say why; and for the same reason, or no reason, your mother herself. You must therefore take especial care that you never speak of one of these people."

"And mamma?"

"Her name least of all. There may come a time—indeed, it is sure to come—when this difficulty can be got over; but any imprudence now—the smallest mistake—would destroy this chance. Of course it's very hard on you, my poor fellow, to be debarred from the very theme you'd like best to dwell on; but when you know the danger—not merely danger, but the positive certainty of mischief—a chance word might bring about, I read you very ill, or you'll profit by my warning."

I bent my head to mean assent, but I could not speak.

"Papa will question you whether you have been to school, and what books you are reading, and your answer will be, 'Never at school; had all my lessons at home.' Not a word more, mind that, Digby. Say it now after me, that I may see if you can be exact to a syllable."

I repeated the words correctly and he patted me affectionately on the shoulder, and said,—

"You and I are sure to get on well together. When I meet with a boy, who, besides being intelligent, is a born gentleman, I never hesitate about treating him as my equal, save in that knowledge of life I'm quite ready to share with him. I don't want to be a Pope with my pupil, and say, 'You are not to do this, or think that,' and give no reason why. You'll always find me ready to discuss with you, and talk over, anything that puzzles you. I was not treated in that fashion myself, and I know well what the repressive system has cost me. You follow me, don't you, in what I say?"

"Yes, sir; I think I understand it all."

Whether I looked as if my words had more meaning than they expressed, or that some sort of misgiving was working within him that he had been hasty in his confidence, I know not; but he arose suddenly, and said, "I must go and get a cigarette." And with that he left me.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VILLA MALIBRAN.

For some hours I wandered over the house, admiring the pictures, and the bronzes, and the statuettes, and the hundreds of odd nick-nacks of taste or curiosity that filled the salons. The treasures of art were all new to me, and I thought I could never weary of gazing on some grand landscape by Both, or one of those little interiors of Dutch life by Ostade or Mieris. It seemed to me the very summit of luxury, that all these glorious objects should be there, awaiting, as it were, the eye of him who owned them, patient slaves of his pleasure, to be rewarded by, perhaps, a hurried glance as he passed. The tempered light, the noiseless footsteps, as one trod the triple-piled carpet, the odour of rich flowers everywhere, imparted a dreaminess to the sense of enjoyment, that, after long, long years, I can recall and almost revive by an effort of memory.

I met no one as I loitered through the rooms, for I was in a part of the house only opened on great occasions, or for large receptions; and so I strayed on, lost in wonderment at the extent and splendour of a scene which, to my untutored senses, seemed of an actually royal magnificence. Having reached what I believed to be the limit of the suite of rooms, I was about to retrace my steps, when I saw that a small octagon tower opened from an angle of the room, though no apparent doorway led into it. This puzzle interested me at once, and I set about to resolve it, if I might. I opened one of the windows to inspect the tower on the outside, and saw that no stairs led up to it, nor any apparent communication existed with the rest of the house. I bethought me of the sliding mirror which in my own room concealed the book-case, and set to work to see if some similar contrivance had not been employed here; but I searched in vain. Defeated and disappointed, I was turning away, when, passing my hand along the

margin of a massive picture-frame, I touched a small button ; and as I did so, with a faint sound like a wail, the picture moved slowly, like an opening door, and disclosed the interior of the tower. I entered at once, my curiosity now raised to a point of intensity to know what had been so carefully and cunningly guarded from public view. What a blank disappointment was mine ! The little room, about nine or ten feet in diameter, contained but a few straw-bottomed chairs, and a painted table on which a tea-service of common blue-ware stood. A Dutch clock was on a bracket at one side of the window, and a stuffed bird—a grouse, I believe—occupied another. A straight-backed old sofa, covered with a vulgar chintz, stood against the wall ; an open book, with a broken fan in the leaves, to mark the place, lay on the sofa. The book was *Paul and Virginia*. A common sheet almanac was nailed against the wall, but over the printed columns of the months a piece of white paper was pasted, on which, in large letters, was written, " June 11, 18—. Dies infausta." I started. I had read that date once before in my mother's prayer-book, and had learned it was her marriage-day. As a ray of sunlight, displays in an instant every object within its beam, I at once saw the meaning of every detail around me. These were the humble accessories of that modest home from which my dear mother was taken ; these were the grim reminders of a time my father desired to perpetuate as an undying sorrow. I trembled to think what a nature I should soon be confronted with, and how terrible must be the temper of a man whose resentments asked for such aliment to maintain them ! I stole away abashed at my own intrusiveness, and feeling that I was rightfully punished by the misery that overwhelmed me. How differently now did all the splendour appear to me as I retraced my steps ! how defiantly I gazed on that magnificence which seemed to insult the poverty I had just quitted !

What a contrast to the nurtured spitefulness of his conduct was my poor mother's careful preservation of a picture representing my father in his uniform. A badly painted thing it was ; but with enough of likeness to recall him. And as such, in defiance of neglect, and ill-usage, and insult, she preserved it,—a memorial, not of happier days, but of a time when she dreamed of happiness to come. While I was thus thinking, seeking in my mind comparisons between them, which certainly redounded but little to his credit, Nixon came up to me, saying, " Oh, Master Digby, we've been looking for you in every direction. Sir Roger has asked over and over why you have not been to see him ; and I'm afraid you'll find him displeased at your delay."

" I'm ready now," said I, drily, and followed him.

My father was in his study, lying on a sofa, and cutting the leaves of a new book as I entered ; and he did not interrupt the operation to offer me his hand.

" So, sir," said he, calmly and coldly, " you have taken your time to present yourself to me ? Apparently you preferred making acquaintance with the house and the grounds."

"I am very sorry, sir," I began ; "but I did not know you had risen. Nixon told me about one or two——"

"Indeed ! I was not aware that you and Mr. Nixon had been discussing my habits. Come nearer ; nearer still. What sort of dress is this ? Is it a smock-frock you have on ?"

"No, sir. It's a blouse to keep my jacket clean. I have got but one."

"And these shoes ; are they of your own making ?"

"No, sir. I couldn't make even as good as these."

"You are a very poor-looking object, I must say. What was Antoine about that he didn't at least make you look like a gentleman, eh ? Can you answer me that ?"

"No, sir, I cannot."

"Nor I either," said he, sighing. "Have you been equally neglected inside as out ? Have you learned to read ?"

"Yes, sir."

"And to write ?"

"Yes, sir."

"Write my name, then, there, on that piece of paper, and let me see it." I drew nigh, and wrote in a full, bold hand, Roger Norcott.

"Why not Sir Roger Norcott, boy ? Why not give me my name and title too ?"

"You said your name, sir, and I thought——"

"No matter what you thought. This Literalism comes of home breeding," muttered he to himself ; "they are made truthful at the price of being vulgar. What do you know besides reading and writing ?"

"A little Latin, sir, and some French, and some German, and three books of Euclid, and the Greek grammar——"

"There, there, that's more than enough. It will tax your tutor's ingenuity to stub up all this rubbish, and prepare the soil for real acquirement. I was hoping I should see you a savage ; a fresh, strong-natured, impulsive savage ! What I'm to do with you, with your little peddling knowledge of a score of things, I can't imagine. I'd swear you can neither ride, row, nor fence, never handled a cricket-ball or a single-stick ?"

"Quite true, sir ; but I'd like to do every one of them."

"Of course you have been taught music ?"

"Yes, sir ; the piano and a little singing."

"That completes it," cried he, flinging his book from him. "They've been preparing you for a travelling circus, while I wanted to make you a gentleman. Mind me now, sir, and don't expect that I ever repeat my orders to any one. What I say once I mean to be observed. Let your past life be entirely forgotten by you—a thing that had no reality ; begin from this day—from this very room—a new existence, which is to have neither link nor tie to what has gone before it. The persons you will see here, their ways, their manners, their tone, will be examples for your imitation ; copy them, not servilely, nor indiscriminately, but as you will

find how their traits will blend with your own nature. Never tell an untruth, never accept an insult without redress, be slow about forming friendships, and where you hate, hate thoroughly. That's enough for the present. Ask Mr. Eccles to have the kindness to take you to his tailor and order some clothes. You must dine alone till you are suitably dressed. After that you shall come to my table. One thing more and you may go: don't ever approach me with tales or complaints of any one; right yourself where you can, and where you cannot, bear your grievance silently. You can change nothing, alter nothing, here; you are a guest, but a guest over whom I exercise full control. If you please me it will be well for you; if not, you understand—it will cost me little to tell you so. Go. Go now." He motioned me to leave him, and I went. Straight to my room I went, and sat down at once to write it all to mother. My heart swelled with indignation at the way I had been received, and a hundred times over did I say to myself that there was no poverty, no hardship I would not face rather than buy a life of splendour on such ignominious terms. Oh, if I could but get back again to the little home I had quitted, how I would bless the hour that restored me to peace of mind and self-respect! As I wrote, my indignation warmed with every line. I found that my passion was actually mastering my reason. Better to finish this, later on—when I shall be cooler, thought I; and I walked to my window and opened it. There were voices of people speaking in the paddock below, and I leaned over the balcony, and saw the two men I had seen at breakfast, seated on rustic chairs, watching a young horse being broken to the saddle. The well-worn ring in the grass showed that this spot was reserved for such purposes, nor was I displeased to know that such a source of interest lay so near to me.

"Isn't he one of your Mexicans, George?" asked Captain Hotham.

"No, sir, he's a Hungarian-bred 'un. Master calls him a Jucker, whatever that is."

"Plenty of action, anyhow."

"A little too much, sir; that's his fault. He's a-comin' now, and it's all they can do to keep him going over the park paling. Take this one back," said he to the groom, who was ringing a heavy-shouldered, ungainly colt in the ring.

"You'll not gain much credit by that animal, George," said Cleremont, as he lighted a cigar.

"He ain't a beauty, sir; he's low before, and he's cow-hooked behind; but Sir Roger says he's the best blood in Norfolk. Take care, take care, sir! the skittish devil never knows where he'll send his hind-legs. Steady, Tom, don't check him: why, he's sweating as if he had been round the two-mile course."

The animal that called for this criticism was a dark chestnut, but so bathed in sweat as to appear almost black. He was one of those cross breeds between the Arab and the western blood, that gain all the beauty of head and crest and straightly-formed croup, and yet have length of

body and depth of rib, denied to the pure Arab. To my thinking he was the most perfect creature I had ever seen, and as he bounded and plunged, there was a supple grace and pliancy about him indescribably beautiful.

George now unloosened the long reins which were attached to the heavy surcingle, and after walking the animal two or three times round the circle, suffered him to go free. As if astonished at his liberty, the young creature stood still for a minute or two, and sniffed the air, and then gave one wild bound and headlong plunge, as though he were going straight into the earth; after which he looked timidly about him, and then walked slowly along in the track worn by the others.

"He's far quieter than the last time I saw him," said Hotham.

"He's gettin' more sense every day, sir," replied George; "he don't scratch his head with his hind-leg now, sir, and he don't throw hisself down neither."

"He hasn't given up biting, I see," said Cleremont.

"No, sir; and they tell me them breed never does: but it's only play, sir."

"I'll give you six months before you can call him fit to ride, George."

"My name ain't Spinner, sir, if the young gent as come yesterday don't back him in six weeks' time."

"And is it for the boy Norcott intends him?" asked Cleremont of Hotham.

"So he told me yesterday; and though I warned him that he hadn't another boy if that fellow should come to grief, he only said, 'If he's got my blood in him, he'll keep his saddle; and if he hasn't, he had better make room for another.'"

"Ain't he a-going beautiful now?" cried George, as the animal swung slowly along at a gentle trot, every step of which was as measured as clock-work.

"You'll have to teach the youngster also, George," said Hotham. "I'm sure he never backed a horse in his life."

"Nay, sir, he rode very pretty indeed when he was six years old. I didn't put him on a Sheltie, or one of the hard-mouthed 'uns, but a nice little lively French mare, that reared up the moment he bore hard on her bit; so that he learned to sit on his beast without holdin' on by the bridle."

"He's a loutish boy," said Cleremont to the captain. "I'll wager what you like they'll not make a horseman of him."

"Eccles says he's a confounded pedant," said the other; "that he wanted to cap Horace with him at breakfast."

"Poor Bob! that wasn't exactly his line; but he'd hold his own in Balzac or Fred Soulié."

"Oh, now I see what Norcott was driving at when he said, 'I wanted the stuff to make a gentleman, and they've sent me the germ of a school usher.' I said, 'Send him to sea with me. I shall be afloat in March, and I'll take him.'"

"Well, what answer did he make you?"

"It wasn't a civil one," said the other, gruffly. "He said, 'You misapprehend me, Hotham. A sea captain is only a boatswain in epaulettes. I mean the boy to be a gentleman.'"

"And you bore that?"

"Yes. Just as well as you bore his telling you at dinner on Sunday last that a Legation secretary was a cross between an old lady and a clerk in the Customs."

"A man who scatters impertinences broadcast is only known for the merits of his cook or his cellar."

"Both of which are excellent."

"Shall I send him in, sir?" asked George, as he patted the young horse and caressed him.

"Well, Eccles," cried Hotham, as the tutor lounged lazily up, "what do you say to the mount they're going to put your pupil on?"

"I wish they'd wait a bit. I shall not be ready for orders till next spring, and I'd rather they'd not break his neck before February or March."

"Has Norcott promised you the presentation, Bob?"

"No. He can't make up his mind whether he'll give it to me or to a Plymouth brother, or to that fellow that was taken up at Salford for blasphemy, and who happens to be in full orders."

"With all his enmity to the Established Church, I think he might be satisfied with you," said Cleremont.

"Very neat, and very polite, too," said Eccles; "but that this is the Palace of Truth I might feel nettled."

"Is it, by Jove?" cried Hotham. "Then it must be in the summer months, when the house is shut up. Who has got a strong cigar? these Cubans of Norcott's have no flavour. It must be close on luncheon-time."

"I can't join you, for I've to go into town, and get my young bear trimmed, and his nails cut. 'Make him presentable,' Norcott said, "and I've had easier tasks to do."

So saying, Eccles moved off in one direction, while Hotham and Cleremont strolled away in another; and I was left to my own reflections, which were not few.

CHAPTER V.

A FIRST DINNER-PARTY.

I was made "presentable" in due time, and on the fifth day after my arrival made my appearance at the dinner-table. "Sit there, sir," said my father, "opposite me." And I was not sorry to perceive that an enormous vase with flowers effectually screened me from his sight. The post of honour thus accorded me was a sufficient intimation to my father's guests

how he intended me to be treated by them ; and as they were without an exception all hangers-on and dependants,—men who dined badly or not at all when uninvited to his table,—they were marvellously quick in understanding that I was to be accepted as his heir, and, after himself, the person of most consideration there.

Besides the three individuals I have already mentioned, our party included two foreigners—Baron Steinmetz, an aide-de-camp of the King, and an Italian duke, San Giovanni. The duke sat on my father's right, the baron on mine. The conversation during dinner was in French, which I followed imperfectly, and was considerably relieved on discovering that the German spoke French with difficulty, and blundered over his genders as hopelessly as I should have done had I attempted to talk. "Ach Gott," muttered he to himself in German, "when people were seeking for a common language, why didn't they take one that all humanity could pronounce?"

"So meine ich auch, Herr Baron," cried I; "I quite agree with you."

He turned towards me with a look of positive affection, on seeing I knew German, and we both began to talk together at once with freedom.

"What's the boy saying?" cried my father, as he caught the sounds of some glib speech of mine. "Don't let him bore you with his bad French, Steinmetz."

"He is charming me with his admirable German," said the baron. "I can't tell when I have met a more agreeable companion."

This was of course a double flattery, for my German was very bad, and my knowledge on any subject no better; but the fact did not diminish the delight the praise afforded me.

"Do you know German, Digby?" asked my father.

"A little—a very little, sir."

"The fellow would say he knew Sanscrit, if you asked him," whispered Hotham to Eccles; but my sharp ears overheard him.

"Come, that's better than I looked for," said my father. "What do you say, Eccles? Is there stuff there?"

"Plenty, Sir Roger; enough and to spare. I count on Digby to do me great credit yet."

"What career do you mean your son to follow?" asked the Italian, while he nodded to me over his wine-glass in most civil recognition.

"I'll not make a sailor of him, like that sea-wolf yonder; nor a diplomatist, like my silent friend in the corner. Neither shall he be a soldier till British armies begin to do something better than hunt out illicit stills and protect process-servers."

"A politician, perhaps?"

"Certainly not, sir. There's no credit in belonging to a Parliament brought down to the meridian of soap-boilers and bankrupt bill-brokers."

"There's the Church, Sir Roger," chimed in Eccles.

"There's the Pope's Church, with some good prizes in the wheel; but your branch, Master Bob, is a small concern, and it is trembling besides. No. I'll make him none of these. It is in our vulgar passion

for money-getting we throw our boys into this or that career in life, and we narrow to the stupid formula of some profession abilities that were meant for mankind. I mean Digby to deal with the world ; and to fit him for the task, he shall learn as much of human nature as I can afford to teach him."

"Ah, there's great truth in that, very great truth ; very wise and very original, too," were the comments that ran round the board.

Excited by his theme, and elated by his success, my father went on :

"If you want a boy to ride, you don't limit him to the quiet hackney that neither pulls nor shies, neither bolts nor plunges ; and so, if you wish your son to know his fellow-men, you don't keep him in a charmed circle of deans and archdeacons, but you throw him fearlessly into contact with old debauchees like Hotham, or abandoned scamps of the style of Cleremont"—and here he had to wait till the laughter subsided to add, "and, last of all, you take care to provide him with a finishing tutor like Eccles."

"I knew your turn was coming, Bob," whispered Hotham ; but still all laughed heartily, well satisfied to stand ridicule themselves if others were only pilloried with them.

When dinner was over, we sat about a quarter of an hour, not more, and then adjourned to coffee in a small room that seemed half boudoir, half conservatory. As I loitered about, having no one to speak to, I found myself at last in a little shrubbery, through which a sort of labyrinth meandered. It was a taste of the day revived from olden times, and amazed me much by its novelty. While I was puzzling myself to find out the path that led out of the entanglement, I heard a voice I knew at once to be Hotham's saying,—

"Look at that boy of Norcott's : he's not satisfied with the imbroglio within doors, but he must go out to mystify himself with another."

"I don't much fancy that young gentleman," said Cleremont.

"And I only half. Bob Eccles says we have all made a precious mistake in advising Norcott to bring him back."

"Yet it was our only chance to prevent it. Had we opposed the plan, he was sure to have determined on it. There's nothing for it but your notion, Hotham ; let him send the brat to sea with you."

"Yes, I think that would do it." And now they had walked out of earshot, and I heard no more.

If I was not much reassured by these droppings I was far more moved by the way in which I came to hear them. Over and over had my dear mother cautioned me against listening to what was not meant for me ; and here, simply because I found myself the topic, I could not resist the temptation to learn how men would speak of me. I remembered well the illustration by which my mother warned me as to the utter uselessness of the sort of knowledge thus gained. She told me of a theft some visitor had made at Abbotsford—the object stolen being a signet-ring Lord Byron had given to Sir Walter. The man who stole this could never display the

treasure without avowing himself a thief. He had therefore taken what from the very moment of the fraud became valueless. He might gaze on it in secret with such pleasure as his self-accusings would permit. He might hug himself with the thought of possession; but how could that give pleasure, or how drown the everlasting shame the mere sight of the object must revive? So would it be, my mother said, with him who unlawfully possessed himself of certain intelligence which he could not employ without being convicted of the way he gained it. The lesson thus illustrated had not ceased to be remembered by me; and though I tried all my casuistry to prove that I listened without intention, almost without being aware of it, I was shocked and grieved to find how soon I was forgetting the precepts she had laboured so hard to impress upon me.

She had also said, "By the same rule which would compel you to restore to its owner what you had become possessed of wrongfully, you are bound to let him you have accidentally overheard know to what extent you are aware of his thoughts."

"This much at least I can do," said I: "I can tell these gentlemen that I heard a part of their conversation."

I walked about for nigh an hour revolving these things in my head, and at last returned to the house. As I entered the drawing-room I was struck by the silence. My father, Cleremont, and the two foreigners were playing whist at one end of the room, Hotham and Eccles were seated at chess at another. Not a word was uttered save some brief demand of the game, or a murmured "check," by the chess-players. Taking my place noiselessly beside these latter, I watched the board eagerly to try and acquire the moves.

"Do you understand the game?" whispered Hotham.

"No, sir," said I, in the same cautious tone.

"I'll show you the moves, when this party is over." And I muttered my thanks for the courtesy.

"This is intolerable," cried out my father. "That confounded whispering is far more distracting than any noise. I have lost all count of my game. I say, Eccles, why is not that boy in bed?"

"I thought you said he might sup, Sir Roger."

"If I did it was because I thought he knew how to conduct himself. Take him away at once."

And Eccles rose, and with more kindness than I had expected from him, said, "Come, Digby, I'll go too, for we have both to be early risers to-morrow."

Thus ended my first day in public, and I have no need to say what a strange conflict filled my head that night as I dropped off to sleep.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW THE DAYS WENT OVER.

IF I give one day of my life, I give, with very nearly exactness, the unbroken course of my existence. I rose very early—hours ere the rest of the household was stirring—to work at my lessons, which Mr. Eccles apportioned for me with a liberality that showed he had the highest opinion of my abilities, or—as I discovered later on to be the truth—a profound indifference about them. Thus a hundred lines of Virgil, thirty of Xenophon, three propositions of Euclid, with a sufficient amount of history, geography, and logic, would be an ordinary day's work. It is fair I should own that when the time of examination came I found him usually imbibing seltzer and curaçoa, with a wet towel round his head; or, in his robust moments, practising the dumb-bells to develop his muscles. So that the interrogatories were generally in this wise—

"How goes it, Digby? What of the Homer—oh?"

"It's Xenophon, sir."

"To be sure it is. I was forgetting, as a man might who had my headache. And, by the way, Digby, why will your father give Burgundy at supper instead of Bordeaux? Some one must surely have told him accidentally it was a deadly poison, for he adheres to it with desperate fidelity."

"I believe I know my Greek, sir," would I say, modestly, to recall him to the theme.

"Of course you do; you'd cut a sorry figure here this morning if you did not know it. No, sir; I'm not the man to enjoy your father's confidence and take his money, and betray my trust. His words to me were, 'Make him a gentleman, Eccles. I could find scores of fellows to cram him with Greek particles and double equations, but I want the man who can turn out the perfect article—the gentleman.' Come now, what relations subsisted between Cyrus and Xenophon?"

"Xenophon coached him, sir."

"So he did. Just strike a light for me. My head is splitting for want of a cigar. You may have a cigarette, too. I don't object. Virgil we'll keep till to-morrow. Virgil was a muff, after all. Virgil was a decentish sort of Martin Tupper, Digby. He had no wit, no repartee, no smartness; he prosed about ploughs and shepherds, like a maudlin old squire; or he told a very shady sort of anecdote about Dido, which I always doubted should be put into the hands of youth. Horace is free too, a thought too free; but he couldn't help it. Horace lived the same kind of life we do here, a species of roast-partridge and pretty woman sort of life; but then he was the gentleman always. If old Flaccus had lived now, he'd have been pretty much like Bob Eccles, and putting in his

divinity lectures perhaps. By the way, I hope your father won't go and give away that small rectory in Kent. 'We who live to preach, must preach to live.' That isn't exactly the line, but it will do. *Pulvis et umbra sumus*, Digby; and, take what care we may of ourselves, we must go back, as the judges say, to the place from whence we came. There now, you've had classical criticism, sound morality, worldly wisdom, and the rest of it; and, with your permission, we'll pack up the books, and stand prorogued till—let me see—Saturday next."

Of course I moved no amendment, and went my way rejoicing.

From that hour I was free to follow my own inclinations, which usually took a horsey turn, and as the stable offered several mounts, I very often rode six hours a day. Hotham was always to be found in the pistol-gallery about four of an afternoon, and I usually joined him there, and speedily became more than his match.

"Well, youngster," he would say, when beaten and irritable, "I can beat your head off at billiards, anyhow."

But I was not long in robbing him of even this boast, and in less than three months I could defy the best player in the house. The fact was, I had in a remarkable degree that small talent for games of every kind which is a specialty with certain persons. I could not only learn a game quickly, but almost always attain considerable skill in it.

"So, sir," said my father to me one day at dinner—and nothing was more rare than for him to address a word to me, and I was startled as he did so—"So, sir, you are going to turn out an Admirable Crichton on my hands, it seems. I hear of nothing but your billiard-playing, your horsemanship, and your cricketing, while Mr. Eccles tells me that your progress with him is equally remarkable." He stopped, and seemed to expect me to make some rejoinder; but I could not utter a word, and felt overwhelmed at the observation and notice his speech had drawn upon me.

"It's better I should tell you at once," resumed my father, "that I dislike prodigies. I dislike because I distrust them. The fellow who knows at fourteen what he might reasonably have known at thirty is not unlikely to stop short at fifteen, and grow no more. I don't wish to be personal, but I have heard it said Cleremont was a very clever boy."

The impertinence of this speech, and the laughter it at once excited, served to turn attention away from me; but, through the buzz and murmur around, I overheard Cleremont say to Hotham, "I shall pull him up short one of these days, and you'll see an end of all this."

"Now," continued my father, "if Eccles had told me that the boy was a skilful hand at sherry-cobbler, or a rare judge of a Cuban cigar, I'd have reposed more faith in the assurance than when he spoke of his classics."

"He ain't bad at a ginsling with bitters, that I must say," said

Eccles, whose self-control, or good-humour, or mayhap some less worthy trait, always carried him successfully over a difficulty.

"So, sir," said my father, turning again on me, "the range of your accomplishments is complete. You might be a tapster or a jockey. When the nobility of France came to ruin in the Revolution the best blood of the kingdom became barbers and dancing-masters: so that when some fine morning that gay gentleman yonder will discover that he is a beggar, he'll have no difficulty in finding a calling to suit his tastes, and square with his abilities. What's Hotham grumbling about? Will any one interpret him for me?"

"Hotham is saying that this claret is corked," said the sea captain, with a hoarse loud voice.

"Bottled at home!" said my father, "and, like your own education, Hotham, spoiled for a beggarly economy."

"I'm glad you've got it," muttered Cleremont, whose eyes glistened with malignant spite. "I have had enough of this; I'm for coffee," and he arose as he spoke.

"Has Cleremont left us?" asked my father.

"Yes; that last bottle has finished him. I told you before, Nixon knows nothing about wine. I saw that hogshcad lying bung up for eight weeks before it was drawn off for bottling."

"Why didn't you speak to him about it, then?"

"And be told that I'm not his master, eh? You don't seem to know, Norcott, that you've got a houseful of the most insolent servants in Christendom. Cleremont's wife wanted the chestnuts yesterday in the phaeton, and George refused her; she might take the cobs, or nothing."

"Quite true," chimed in Eccles; "and the fellow said, 'I'm a-taking the young horses out in the break, and if the missis wants to see the chestnuts, she'd better come with me.'"

"And as to a late breakfast now, it's quite impossible; they delay and delay till they run you into luncheon," growled Hotham.

"They serve me my chocolate pretty regularly," said my father, negligently, and he arose and strolled out of the room. As he went he slipped his arm within mine, and said, in a half-whisper, "I suppose it will come to this—I shall have to change my friends or my household. Which would you advise?"

"I'd say the friends, sir."

"So should I, but that they would not easily find another place. There, go and see is the billiard-room lighted. I want to see you play a game with Cleremont."

Cleremont was evidently sulking under the sarcasm passed on him, and took up his cue to play with a bad grace.

"Who will have five francs on the party?" said my father. "I'm going to back the boy."

"Make it pounds, Norcott," said Hotham.

"I'll give you six to five, in tens," said Cleremont to my father.
"Will you take it."

I was growing white and red by turns all this time. I was terrified at the thought that money was to be staked on my play, and frightened by the mere presence of my father at the table.

"The youngster is too nervous to play. Don't let him, Norcott," said Hotham, with a kindness I had not given him credit for.

"Give me the cue, Digby; I'll take your place," said my father, and Cleremont and Hotham both drew nigh, and talked to him in a low tone.

"Eight and the stroke then be it," said my father, "and the bet in fifties." The others nodded, and Cleremont began the game.

I could not have believed I could have suffered the amount of intense anxiety that game cost me. Had my life been on the issue I do not think I could have gone through greater alternations of hope and fear than now succeeded in my heart. Cleremont started with eight points odds, and made thirty-two off the balls before my father began to play. He now took his place, and by the first stroke displayed a perfect mastery of the game. There was a sort of languid grace, an indolent elegance about all he did, that when the stroke required vigour or power made me tremble for the result, but somehow he imparted the exact amount of force needed, and the balls moved about here and there as though obedient to some subtle instinct of which the cue gave a mere sign. He scored forty-two points in a few minutes, and then drawing himself up, said: "There's an eight-stroke now on the table. I'll give any one three hundred Naps to two that I do it."

None spoke. "Or, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll take fifty from each of you and draw the game!" Another as complete silence ensued. "Or, here's a third proposition, Give me fifty between you, and I'll hand over the cue to the boy; he shall finish the game."

"Oh, no, sir! I beg you—I entreat—" I began; but already, "Done," had been loudly uttered by both together, and the bet was ratified.

"Don't be nervous, boy," said my father, handing me his cue. "You see what's on the balls. You cannon and hold the white, and land the red in the middle pocket. If you can't do the brilliant thing, and finish the game with an eight-stroke, do the safe one—the cannon or the hazard. But, above all, don't lose your stroke, sir. Mind that, for I've a pot of money on the game."

"I don't think you ought to counsel him, Norcott," said Cleremont. "If he's a player, he's fit to devise his own game."

"Oh, hang it, no," broke in Hotham; "Norcott has a perfect right to tell him what's on the table."

"If you object seriously, sir," said my father proudly, "the party is at an end."

"I put it to yourself," began Cleremont.

"You shall not appeal to me against myself, sir. You either withdraw your objection, or you maintain it."

"Of course he withdraws it," said Hotham, whose eyes never wandered from my father's face.

Cleremont nodded a half-unwilling assent.

"You will do me the courtesy to speak, perhaps," said my father ; and every word came from him with a tremulous roll.

"Yes, yes, I agree. There was really nothing in my remark," said Cleremont, whose self-control seemed taxed to its last limit.

"There, go on, boy, and finish this stupid affair," said my father ; and he turned to the chimney to light his cigar.

I leaned over the table, and a mist seemed to rise before me. I saw volumes of cloud rolling swiftly across, and meteors, or billiard-balls, I knew not which, shooting through them. I played and missed ; I did not even strike a ball. A wild roar of laughter, a cry of joy, and a confused blending of several voices in various tones followed, and I stood there like one stunned into immobility. Meanwhile Cleremont finished the game, and, clapping me gaily on the shoulder, cried, "I'm more grateful to you than your father is, my lad. That shaking hand of yours has made a difference of two hundred Naps to me." I turned towards the fire, my father had left the room.

The Turkomans and other Tribes of the North-East Turkish Frontier.*

INTERESTING as it is to watch the progress and development of nations, still more interesting is it to witness their first origin and beginnings; not only from the very rareness of opportunity for observing such phenomena, but also from the peculiar and instructive character of the circumstances which occasion and accompany them. Now, during many years passed in the East, the question had again and again occurred to my mind, whether the productive powers of those regions which have given birth to so many nationalities, so many dynasties, so many empires,—those regions whence not only the outlying districts of Asia itself, but even Europe and Africa, have been so often flooded, were indeed wholly exhausted; or whether any “new blood” might yet be expected thence for transfusion into the veins of this young-old world of ours, any new outpourings into the stream of time? For a long while I could not find any satisfactory answer to this query. Only thus much, that a protracted residence among Arabs, Syrians, Persians and Indians, central or southern, had convinced me that no such “revival” could be expected from amongst them; that in those basins of human life, the water, once so overflowing, had ebbed back for good into its normal limits, and that although Arabs, Persians, Syrians, Armenians, Mahrattas, Tamils and the like, might long continue to exist as such, each race moving on its gradually progressive or retrogressive line, yet that no new springs of nation or empire could—within the reach, that is, of any probable calculation—be expected to be broken up and opened in or from that part of the great deep of mankind. But latterly, during two years of residence, partly in Eastern Turkey and partly in the adjoining Caucasus, I have found myself the bystander of a well-head of nationality, in a region where the process of production and formation is rapidly going on, where the elements assume fresh combinations, ferment, and in fermenting increase; promising at no distant period to crystallize into a new nationality, with a type and destiny of its own, differing from any that have as yet gone before it.

The scene of these vital energies, the region on which we may now, not unprofitably, fix a half-hour's attention, is the great Asiatic highland placed south-east of the Black Sea and south-west of the Caspian. The limits of this region are assigned: westward by the torrent-river Kizil-Irmak, the Halys of the ancients; southwards by the Tigro-Euphrates valley, and what adjoins it; eastwards by the deserts and tracts of Central Persia,

* This paper was, in substance, given by the writer at the meeting of the British Association in Norwich, August, 1883.

and northward by the Black Sea, Russian Georgia, and the Caspian. The highland itself is formed by a huge mountain-chain, or rather by several intertangled chains, to which the collective name of Anti-Caucasus might be not inaptly given, as the whole system runs parallel to, and in formation and general character much resembles, the well-known Caucasus, from which it is separated by the wide valley of Georgia and the plains watered by the Rion or Phasis, and the Araxes. Thus the direction of this Anti-Caucasus, this Asiatic Switzerland, lies from north-west to south-east; that is, from the Anatolian coast behind Trebizond to the lofty peak of Demavend and the neighbourhood of Tebrzez or Tauris. It comprises the whole East of Anatolia, with northern Kurdistan, both parts of the Ottoman dominion, besides the Russian provinces of Erivan and Kara-bagh, with the Persian province of Azerbeyjan; its central point is an old, almost a pre-historic, starting-point in the history of our kind, the double cone of Ararat, and its never-melting snows.

No part of the world is, it would seem, better fitted to become what men call the cradle of a nation. The soil, everywhere fertile, is, up to a height of 6,000 feet and more above sea-level, rich to superabundance in all kinds of cereals,—corn, rye, barley, oats, and the like; higher up are summer pasture-lands, or “yailas,” to give them their local name, of vast extent, clothed with excellent grass; in the valleys below ripen all the products of our own South-European climate,—vines, fruit-trees, maize, rice, tobacco, and varied cultivation, alternating with forests unexceptionally the noblest that it has ever been my chance to see: ash, walnut, box-wood, elm, beech, oak, fir, and pine. If to its above-ground riches we add the metallic products of the land, principally iron and copper, with not unfrequent silver and lead, and also, I am informed, but must speak with hesitation on a subject where so much technical knowledge is required, coal; add also a pure and healthy climate, averaging in temperature that of Southern Germany; add perennial snows on the heights and abundant rains in the valleys, whence flow down those great rivers, Chorook, Araxes, Tigris and Euphrates, with all their countless tributaries, and other water-courses of less historic note, but of scarce less fertilizing importance, some to seek the Black Sea and the Caspian, some the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf;—all this, and we may reasonably conclude that few portions of the earth's surface are, natural resources considered, better adapted for the habitation, increase, and improvement of man.

The population, made up in the main from Armenians, Turkomans and Curdes, was however, till latterly, not dense, scarcely perhaps fifteen to the square mile, and was, besides, somewhat on the decline. Want of roads, and insufficient or mismanaged government, may be assigned as the principal causes of so unsatisfactory a condition. But now all is rapidly changing. Russian pressure on the north-east is fast driving the Turkoman tribes, once settled in further lands, into the space just described; the same pressure, of which we in Europe can scarcely form an adequate idea, has lately added a numerous, energetic, and increasing population in the

myriads of Circassians and their kin, expelled from their native mountains to find here, across the Turkish frontier, the toleration and existence which Russia persistently denies to her own non-Russian subjects. Persian anarchy, for it is no better, supplies also its yearly quota of emigrants, chiefly Turkoman; while the somewhat lax hospitality of Turkey receives all these new forms of life within the bounds of the empire, and allows them to combine and develop much as they choose. And they are, in fact, now fast coalescing and organizing themselves into a new nation.

It would be impossible, within the limits assigned by a notice like the present, to go over and investigate the entire extent of territory above traced out, or to follow in detail the ethnological activities going on at each point of its surface. I will accordingly restrict myself for the present to the portion which I have most lately and more thoroughly studied: that, namely, which lies immediately along the north-east Turkish frontier, and which comprises whatever lies between the latitude of Batoum, Kars, and the town of Moosh to the west, and the Russian boundary, from the Black Sea to Mount Ararat, eastwards. From this strip we may estimate much of what passes in the adjoining districts. During August last duty required my presence at Kars, a place well known to history as the stronghold of Eastern Turkey, known also from its gallant though unavailing defence, under British and Hungarian auspices, against the overwhelming forces of Russia, headed by Mouravieff. During my stay there I had the opportunity of forming acquaintance with some of the native Beys, or hereditary nobles, and between us we concerted a visit to the nearer-lying Eastern provinces, namely, those of Kagizmand, Shooragel, Ardahan, and Ajarah, provinces situated, as I have before implied, between the latitude of Kars and the Russian frontier, reaching from Ararat to the Black Sea.

South-east of the rocks of Kars, of its ruined citadel and dismantled batteries, stretches a wide and undulating highland, partly corn-field, partly pasture-land, breaking up into abrupt ravines and craggy heights as it approaches the deep bed of the Arpa-Chai, or "Barley-river," now the limit of the Turkish empire in this direction. Over this highland we set out on our way, mounted on the hardy horses of the country; and it was a pretty sight as we descended from the heights of Kars into the grassy level. All the garrison of the fort, about a thousand in number, had been drawn up outside the gates under arms, to salute us as we went by: so willed the Pasha of Kars, who, in answer to my remonstrances at such an excess of compliment, replied, "It is only right that all the people should see how the Turks honour and respect a representative of the English Government." But besides the Ottoman Pasha, his officials and soldiers, with whom, however important characters in their way, we have nothing special now to do, there rode alongside and around a crowd of horsemen, blending, in one gay and dashing multitude of two hundred or more, every specimen of the various elements now combining, if the world's destinies permit, into one national whole. Omitting names, I may mention among the attending crowd, an old Bey, grave, silver-

bearded, and with features partaking alike of the harsh Turkoman lines and of the more regular and open Georgian mould. Descended from the great Atabeyes who have held this land in fief from the earliest Sultans, he was himself father of the chief now ruling over the very province of Shooragel on which we were now to enter. At a short distance farther on the young Bey himself, gaily dressed, and with a large retinue of horse-men, met us : his Curdish descent on the mother's side had given him a wild, almost a brigand look, which, blending with the austere harshness of his father's expression, made him seem no less worthy than he really was to be ruler over this populous but somewhat turbulent district, where a tight hand and a sharp sword are often needed. In our band rode also his kinsman, the chief of the greatest of all the Curdish tribes, and decorated with the title of Paasha ; he could command the obedience of at least twenty thousand families, all bearing his own name of Silowan ; his residence was at Alajah Dagħ, or "the Variegated Mountain," not far from Ararat ; and there he lived in a style much resembling that of a Fergus MacIvor and his likes in our own Highland North. His dark complexion, long black hair, splendid figure and powerful build, were well set off by his dress, all scarlet and gold ; he was covered with arms and embroidery ; a thorough Curde ; a dangerous enemy, as he has often proved himself, and a doubtful friend. But he is now allied by marriage with the great Georgio-Turkoman family, and, while mindful of his rank, he rode slow and stately by my side, three handsome youths, his sons, gaily dizen'd in scarlet, gold and steel like their father, career'd the plain, unmistakable Turkomans, in all that their mother could make them so.

Such was a sample of the chiefs : their followers, as is usually the case among the lower orders, were still more characteristic in their dress and appearance. Some, the greater number indeed, were genuine Turkomans, short, thick-set, heavy-featured men, with small eyes, brown or black and dusky complexions ; their dress made of dark cloth, trousers and jackets ; and on their heads the national black-wool coverings, slightly conical in shape, which have earned the wearers the nickname of Kara-Papacks, or "Black Caps," by which they are commonly known on these frontiers. Armed with spear and pistol, rarely with sword or carbine, and mounted on small, strong-built, fiery horses, the riders had never enough of galloping after each other, lance-throwing and pistol-firing in mock fight ; utterly regardless of broken ground and rock, a severe tumble of horse and man was a matter of constant occurrence, and of much rough merriment. These Turkomans are fearless and lovers of fight, but they possess also the more sterling qualities of a dogged perseverance, and a power of working to an end hardly inferior to that claimed by our own Anglo-Saxon race. Their fathers, under the Saïook dynasties, Kara-Koïounlis and Ak-Koïounlis, men of the Black Shepherd clan and the White, long ruled over Western Asia ; and the sons have a very distinct intention of doing no less, should their turn come. Whether they ever will or not, we shall try to guess further on. Others, again, were

Curdes, handsomer and more Semitic—to use a worn-out nor very accurate phrase,—than their Turkoman companions, in face and appearance, gayer in dress, lovers of scarlet and bright silk girdles, more addicted, too, to the use of the gun and carbine than the Turkomans. More active and fiery also, but less steady and dependable in work. In the union, daily cementing, of these northern Curdes with the Turkoman basis, lies a great hope of power; each element seeming to supply that which is wanting in the other. Others again, and these were the most remarkable in appearance, were newly arrived Circassians, still wearing their long mountaineer dress of grey or yellow cloth; the breast covered with inworked cartouche pouches; knives are in their girdles, long bright guns slung at their backs, and on their heads high cylindrical caps, of the kind that some Cossacks also wear, of whitish wool the most. These Circassians are generally taller and better proportioned in stature than either Turkomans or Curdes, they are more regular, too, and handsome in feature by far: their hair is generally brown, occasionally auburn; their eyes blue, grey, or hazel. All wear the silver-mounted dagger of the Caucasus, a terrible weapon in close fight, straight, broad, double-edged and pointed. Their character is much what might be expected of men who, with their fathers before them, have been lifelong engaged in guerilla war for liberty, religion, and even existence; such wars turn nobles into intriguers, and peasants into brigands: it cannot be otherwise. At first, too, they showed but little disposition to unite, or even to agree with the elder races of their exile home. But now they, like the rest, are fast amalgamating, by marriage and other social processes, with their Turkoman neighbours; and with this union they acquire more orderly habits and steadier ways. In the Georgian population too, freely sprinkled hereabouts from the earliest times, especially where we go northwards to the Black Sea, the Circassians find something of their own blood and kinsmanship, not severed from them here, as is the case in Russian Georgia, by difference of creed. For all these various races are Mahometan; and, thanks to the violence of Russian bigotry and its encroaching fanaticism, much more earnest Mahometans than they used to be in past years.

To complete our cavalcade we must add to the picture the provincial judge of Shooragel, in his green turban and wide blue robes, an elderly grizzled personage, but a native of the land, and though a man of the gown, not less good in the saddle than any of his Turkoman kinsmen. Also a Mollah, or Queen's counsel (Sultan's counsel, we should say), white-turbaned, freshly arrived from his studies at Constantinople, now for the first time mounted on a young Turkoman horse, decidedly too much for the rider. There are others, beys and chiefs, allied in kindred, and of various rank: of these, cross-descent has often made it impossible to say whether Turkoman, Cürdish, Circassian, or Georgian predominates in their blood and brain. There are also a few negroes, lively and dashing, gaudily dressed, and noisy as elsewhere; great favourites among the

Such was our cavalcade, though varying from time to time as to the precise individuals who composed it, some dropping off and others

replacing them, for a good month. Every day in the saddle, morning and afternoon, we traced from village to village, by valley and mountain, a serpentine line, from Kars down to Kagizmand, at the north-western foot of Ararat, close under the "Variegated Mountain" already mentioned. Throughout this district, called of Kagizmand, the Curdish element is numerically superior. Then up by the strange ruins of Ani, once capital of Armenia, and described by Sir W. Hamilton, now utterly desolate, through the great districts of Lower and Upper Shooragel; here the Turkoman population much outnumbers all others. So is it also in the yet higher-lying province of Ardahan, north, which we next visited; while in the two Ajaras, higher and lower, which we last traversed, till, through the noble forests and wild ravines of the mountain-chain, we reached the shores of the Black Sea near Batoum, Georgian and Circassian blood prevails over all other. But in what regards administration, feeling, and tendency, all these provinces are in fact one, governed by the same rulers, and bound together by community of interest, religion, and even topography.

The entire length of our line of journey was 450 miles; the district itself comprises about 20,000 square miles; the fixed population, to the best of my reckoning, numbers about 700,000 souls, thus averaging thirty-five by the square mile. The nomade or pastoral population, if added to the above, would raise it to sixty at least.

It would be pleasant to myself, for remembrance is pleasant, nor, I think, uninteresting to my readers, were I to describe in detail the memorials of past time which stud that historical region, the grandeur of its scenery, the fertility of its produce, the rushing clearness of its many waters. Here are ruins more ancient and not less vast or architecturally graceful than those of Ani; some are of Armenian, some of yet earlier date, others of Georgian or Seljook construction. Nature, too, has her wonders. The wild black rocks of Kagizmand clustering up toward Ararat; the great clear lake of Childer, fifteen miles in length by four or five in breadth, pure as the Swiss Vier-Wald Stadter or Walen See, and in winter one firm sheet of waggon-traversed ice; the pine-forests, the precipices, the waterfalls, the rich mountain vegetation, bright flowers, dark caves, and iron-laden springs of Ajarah, much surpassing each and all the boasts of the most tourist-sought nooks of Switzerland or Tyrol, which now seem to me but tame; these also would deserve a notice, or at least an attempt. But we must pass them over for the present, and occupy ourselves rather with what is, after all, of higher import, namely, the living inhabitants of the land and their condition.

And, first, I could not but remark with some surprise—for I had come hither imbued with the generally prevailing notion that the Ottoman territory in its interior would present little but waste lands and a diminishing population—that every height we crossed, every valley we entered, opened out to us one or more villages, many of quite recent construction, each containing from 80 to 200 or more houses, and ringed by an inner belt of gardens and an outer one of widely cultivated corn-lands. The

flat-roofed houses, their whitened walls, the barns and fences, sometimes an oblong mosque with a little attempt at dome or minaret, shone gaily in the sun; often contrasting in their cheerful life with the black heavy stone walls of some old Armenian church situated among them, and now long since abandoned to the ruin of disuse and neglect.

"Do you see those villages?" said Youssef Bey, the Turkoman governor of a "kaza," or sub-district, in the province of Shazeragel, as he accompanied me through his territory. "Thirty years ago there were only fifteen villages here; now there are eighty-three." I asked whence this increase, and how. "It is all my father's doing," said he; "and these new-comers are all from Russia." He then proceeded to explain to me the system adopted by himself, and by others also, for colonizing the land. "The Turkomans," said he, "of Erivan and Kara-Bagh,"—you will find these districts in that part of the Anti-Caucasus chain which lies immediately south of Russian Georgia, and contains the great towns of Erivan and Elizabethtopol, with the lovely Erivan lake: they reach from the Turkish frontier to the Caspian,—“these Turkomans and the other Mahometan tribes there dwelling are constantly on the look-out for an opportunity to escape from the territory now that it has been incorporated into Russia. We on our side keep up a constant correspondence with them through the means of our agents, and make them free offer of lands, livelihood, and liberty among ourselves. Sooner or later they come, though they have sometimes difficulty in so doing, as the Cossack guards on the frontier have charge to hinder their passage; when possible, they bring their cattle and goods with them; sometimes they cannot get them across. But whatever be their condition, each family on arrival receives a plot of ground; they find also help to build their houses, and a three-years' exemption from any tax or duty soever. They soon settle down comfortably; till the soil; and in this way the district, from poor and desert, has become rich and populous." To this explanation, given by the Bey, I will add that these immigrations are of constant occurrence; they are, indeed, in some years more numerous than in others; but the tide is always flowing in, and at its present rate may fairly be reckoned at 1,000 families, or about 6,000 individuals of the Turkomans alone, per annum. By what exact means or ways all this is effected, need not here be said. Suffice that I have reason to believe, or rather to know, that during the coming years the movement will not only not slacken, but will assume an extent and a rapidity far exceeding anything that has gone before.

History, and, in the further East, the testimony of our own days, show us the Turkomans shepherds and neatherds in the main; rarely as fixed cultivators or villagers. But from the pastoral life—unlike that of the hunter or savage—to the agricultural is but a step; and wherever an opportunity occurs, this step is readily made; once made, it always tends to become irrevocable. The Turkomans are everywhere making it, and with it find their consequent bettering in all ways. Their skill in agriculture, the wide and harvest-covered fields that surround their settlements,

the comparative comfort of their dwellings, and the constructive ingenuity of the huge stables in which their sheep and cattle find refuge and provender during the long winter months, all prove that their nomade condition in Central Asia is more the result of circumstance than of an innate and irrepressible bent; that under the forms of tribe they have the materials of a nation; and that the city, with all its consequences of wealth, culture, and peaceful civilization, is at least as natural to them as the tent and the mountain side. Sometimes gathered in groups, but now more frequently intermixed among the flat Turkoman dwellings, are the gabled roofs of Circassian cottages. When I say Circassian, I mean to include under that general term several tribes, united often rather by community in their mode of life, their aims and habits, than in their origin; at least so it would appear from their great physical and lingual diversities. Among these the readiest to renounce any acquired ways of violence and plunder are the Abkhasians of West Caucasus; we should also remark that amongst them the anti-Russian guerilla war was comparatively of very short duration. Their general conduct soon becomes excellent and orderly, whether they settle down into peasants or townsmen. The most unruly, on the contrary, are the Chechen, a numerous clan, of East Caucasian origin; yet they, too, amend in time. All have begun to show a tendency to intermarry with the natives around them, which will probably, in this part of the world, soon merge their nationality in that of the Turkomans. This will indeed be a loss to the linguist and the ethnographer; but it will be a gain to the Asiatic cause in general.

Of all the inhabitants hereabouts the most pertinaciously pastoral, and, in consequence, nomade, are the Curdes. The richer and nobler sort among them do indeed take to fixed dwellings, much resembling in construction those of the Turkomans; but the greater number remain shepherds, and prefer flocks to tillage. Hence I less often found them in the villages, but frequently witnessed or passed among their black tents on the high "yailas," or summer pastures, and on the rapid grassy slopes. Unlike the Turkomans, Circassians, and Georgians, their feelings are more clanish, and even individual, than national; but they are pretty sure to follow the general course of those around them, where war or politics are concerned. In the former pursuit they have always excelled; their courage is proverbial; their chiefs are such in fact, not in name only.

But of all others the Georgians are they who, high or low, best ally with the Turkomans, and that to the greatest mutual advantage. Physically they are higher endowed than any of the other races, and they are so mentally also; their only deficiency is in tenacity of purpose, whence they are easily swayed to one way or another; still the obstinate fanaticism and the dreaded tyranny of Russia has done much to steady the Mahomedan Georgians in their new and national cause. Another reason—nor can it be called an undue one—which goes far to facilitate their union with the Turkomans, lies in the treasures of female beauty frequently to be found in a Georgian family; and thus it comes that their alliance is

marriage is eagerly sought after. I have also noticed that in the offspring of mixed marriages hereabouts, the Georgian type is apt to predominate. Still, numbers, and what for want of a better and equally concise word we may term "basal" qualities, will ultimately cause the Georgian element to be merged in the Turkoman, rather than the Turkoman in the Georgian.

Having thus noticed the various components of the population, in what they differ, and in what they combine, I will briefly mention the circumstances which have tended here to prepare the way for and to facilitate the rise of a new and determined nationality, with a special bent and future. The uplands now thus tenanted, and, some thirty years ago, comparatively empty, were before that time the abode of the dispersing and, on its own soil, decreasing Armenian race. Their national capital, indeed, once was Ani, very near the centre of the entire district. But their independence was lost centuries ago, and since that time commercial, and, I must add, usurious tendencies, with little aptitude for pastoral or agricultural pursuits, had been ever tending to remove them from the inlands, and to accumulate them on coasts and in cities, often very far distant. At last, as if on purpose to complete the emptiness of these regions, the Russian Government had, in the days of Paschivitch, by every means that its agents could command, enticed away to within its own limits—to Russian Georgia and the fast depopulating Caucasus—the greater portion of the Armenian agricultural remnant. Thousands of Armenian families then left their villages and fields from Erzeroum to the frontier, and emigrated under the equivocal Moses of Russian guidance towards Tiflis, where, however, not finding the expected blessings of a promised land, they diminished, scattered, or perished. But in their rear a vacant space was thus formed, and it is now teeming with Mahometan life; the Russians have done their appointed task, that of destruction: but they have also unwillingly and unwittingly done the work of Islam; they have converted Armenia into Turkestan. In another manner, too, the Russians have contributed towards the creation of a new and Mahometan nationality. They have not only supplied space, they have infused spirit. Pressure from without, common hatred and well-grounded fear, have gone further to weld these varied materials into one, and to give the new whole a fixed direction, than any skill or enthusiasm from within could ever have done. It is probable that the effect will remain even after the cause has ceased.

A third circumstance, not less influential than the two former, is the weakness of the very Government within whose territory the centre of the new formation is placed. True, the Ottoman Ministry, desirous of assimilating this part of the empire to the rest, appoint from time to time an occasional Stamboulee Pasha or Bey, to govern by the name and in the authority of the Porte. More still, by the fatal Tanseemat of the Sultan's Mahmood and 'Abd-el-Mejid, regulations known as reforms, but in reality destructions, all local and hereditary chieftancy here, no less than in the rest of Turkey, has been legally and officially abolished, and the old land-tenures, howsoever confirmed by firman or usage, have been

taken away. But on these frontiers, and at the furthest end of the empire, "it is a far cry to Lochaber;" and the native chiefs, Georgian, Curde, and Turkoman, or rather each a mixture of all three, with a stronger proportion of the last, do really exercise an authority and collect revenues scarcely less than their predecessors did in the good old days of Turkey.

Thus, in addition to the religious bond of Mahometan union, a second powerful bond, namely, that of hereditary authority, exists and strengthens yearly. Nor less efficacious to promote increase and vigour in the new colony and nation is the land-system here observed. Each peasant,—and between peasant and noble there is no intermediary class,—is a proprietor, owning acres more or less broad, for the use of which he must, of course, pay fixed dues, and sometimes arbitrary exactions, but from which neither he nor his family can be ejected by the will of either chief or governor. Land is never forfeited except where life is forfeited also. Thus, governed by their own nobles, and cultivating their own soil, not tenants at will but proprietors in full right, this population is in a position much more favourable to every national and forward development than is commonly the case throughout the rest of the Ottoman empire. I should add that all males hereabouts from their earliest childhood learn to ride and to handle arms, and both with much skill; so that at a moment's notice all are soldiers.

Nor have the Turkomans, who form a fair three-fourths of this confederation, and from whom the whole takes its colouring and character, forgotten that they are themselves the lineal descendants of the men who, under the great national dynasties of Seljook, Kara-Koionli, and Ak-Koionli, ruled over these very lands, and with them over all Western Asia, from the Sea of Aral to the Ægean,—men of great military and no less administrative power; skilled in architecture also: the ruins of their great constructions at Erzeroum, Sivas, Kaisareeyah, and a hundred other spots still remain, witnessing to a grandeur of conception and graceful skill of detail rarely surpassed even in the West. These ruins, colleges the most, bear witness also to learning and study, to a literature, history, philosophy, jurisprudence, poetry, imagination, once flourishing in exuberant variety, nor even now, in the East that is, wholly forgotten. Unable to withstand the Tartar flood poured in wave after wave from the East, and the steady encroaching organization of the Ottomans on the West, these great dynasties broke up and fell; but their ruins have for four centuries formed the main bulk of the population in Eastern Anatolia and North-western Turkey, and they await but the hour and the man to reunite into an edifice stately and sumptuous like that of past time.

Thus not only within the limits above traced, but over vast tracks east and north where Turkoman villages or tents lie scattered, the materials of a powerful nation await reorganization, and tend rapidly to coalesce round the point where that organization has already begun; invigorated by the infusion of new blood, that of the keen Circassian, the daring Curde, and the more reflective Georgian. Here, too, is one ruling family, men of practical good sense, tried courage, and long experience in action, men

from amongst whom the hoped-for head may well arise. Nor should we wonder; under the reaction which Russian pressure is daily intensifying, to see such a one arise very suddenly. Growths are quick in the East.

Lastly, a remarkable symptom in this part of the world, and one of deep significance, is the revival of the old Mahometan spirit, and that too under a form which may, in our day, be characterized as armed defensive, but which may soon become distinctly offensive and aggressive. This phenomenon is indeed partly due to Russian encroachment, and to a movement, felt rather than reasoned out, of antagonism to western advance; but it is also, and perhaps equally due, to the consciousness of youth and power. New mosques, new schools, new teachers, all on the severer model of what may be called the nineteenth-century Mahometan revival, the same of which Arab Wahabeeism is the exaggerated prototype, are multiplying over the face of the land even in excess of actual requirement; and practices contrary to the teaching of Islam, wine and spirit drinking for instance, unfortunately too common some years since, have now fallen into total discredit, and are abandoned to those in whom custom has rendered them, no less than many other vices, scarce a disgrace, Greeks and Armenians. Thus too Ramadhan is observed, and prayers performed, with much greater exactitude than formerly. High and low, the nation is in training.

And what will there be in the end thereof? The destiny of this new frontier nation, of this Turkoman rejuvenescence, may be one of three. Either they may be, as many others have been, stamped out altogether, and effaced by the uniformity of Russian supremacy and despotism. This, though hardly probable, is possible: Russia does advance in Asia, and means to advance; that she covets, earnestly covets, the very lands over which we have now been travelling is, in spite of all esoteric and official denials, a certain fact; whether she will be allowed to attempt their incorporation into her vast dead territories, and whether, if allowed, she will have strength to do it, were hard to say. Overrated by some, underrated by others, her resources are, for all accurate conception, practically unknown. But thus much can be said for certain: if she succeeds it will be in an evil hour for Asia; perhaps for other countries also. Or, by a different course of events, the Ottoman Government, already not wholly unaware of the formation process now going on near its frontier, may, by a wise skill, attract to itself the yet fermenting elements, and gain for its empire an almost impregnable barrier, not of fortresses but of men and mountains, against Russian encroachment and the fraudulent rivalry of Persia. Should the rulers of Constantinople, renouncing, for this district at least, the fatal policy and pseudo-centralization of their later Sultans, honestly and in good faith recognize the unalienable authority of the native nobility, legalize their titles, confirm or restore the land-tenures, and, by a properly organized militia commanded by its natural leaders, confer the defence of the soil on those with whom its defence is a present and personal interest, they may in their turn rely on numerous and devoted subjects, on all the advantages of free labour, and, in case of

war, on brave soldiers officered by men knowing their duty, and doing it with a will. Old associations, established prestige, and that religious sympathy which, in the East, is almost a nationality, are all in their favour, and help to assure success. And thus, while the Turkish Empire slowly withers, as wither it eventually must, to the West, and its branches fall off one by one, new growth and vigorous shoots on the East may more than repair its losses. But to put this policy in that entirety of execution which alone can render it availing, vigorous resolution is required; and it is to be feared that, what with the weakness of Ottoman counsels, a weakness of latter growth, but now rendered almost connatural by political timidity; with the habit of concentrating all serious attention on those parts of the empire where talkative and superficial Europeans are for ever infiltrating, suggesting, and meddling with the half counsels of divided and doubting minds; and the multitude of self-offered counsellors, in whom, whatever Solomon may say, there is not safety: the Ottoman rulers will let the great chance go by, and the neglected gain will only then be properly understood and regretted when changed to bitter loss. And thus would follow and become fact the third nor the more unlikely possibility, that is, of a new Turkoman dynasty, with fresh destinies and a future of its own.

But whatever be the event, we of the great English empire cannot be indifferent to it. Anxiety is sometimes felt at the news of Russian conquests in Central Asia, and the security of our Indian possessions is by some thought to be jeopardized by the appearance of the two headed eagle in Bokhara or Samarcand. But, in truth, the Russian flag over Alexandropol, within a day's ride of Kars, is much nearer India. Let the line of country, the comparatively narrow line, of which we have been now speaking, from Batoum and the Ajaras on the Black Sea down to Bayazeed and Van, once become Russian territory; and the entire Tigro-Euphrates valley, now separated from Russia and from Russia's obsequious ally, Persia, by Kurdistan alone, becomes Russian also. The Persian Gulf and the directest of all Indian routes, a route where no wide desert tracts, no huge mountain-chains intervene, nothing but the serviceable sea, will thus be not only open to, but absolutely in the hands of, our very doubtful friends. The exclusion of all commerce, all communication by this most important line, except what is Russian and through Russia, will be the first and immediate consequence: what may be the ulterior results time alone can tell. But if India have a vulnerable point, next after Egypt, it is the Euphrates valley and its communications. Of all this the Key, held at present for Turkey and for England too, lies in possession of these very races, the inhabitants of the Turkoman-Curdish territory. To strengthen the hands of our friends, and to guard lest that key be wrested from them, were but good Statesmanship, if timely done.

The Murder of Escobedo.

Of the many eminent men who perished under the jealous suspicions of Philip II., one of the foremost was his brother, Don John of Austria. Between his twenty-first and twenty-sixth years this prince had figured repeatedly as the leader of victorious hosts. Not that he was more than a nominal chief, since the ablest warriors of the day—men like Doria and the Marquis of Santa Cruz—directed his operations, in the guise of lieutenants and advisors. But few people cared to look so deeply, and handsome, valiant, and generous as he was, the renown sat admirably upon him. From the fight of Lepanto to the day of his death he was the idol of the Spaniards, and to a great extent their hope; for the king had then small prospect of male heirs—indeed Philip III. was not born until 1578, the year of Don John's death. Under these circumstances it would have argued an extraordinary lack of ambition had the prince entertained no hope of the succession. But Don John was one of the most aspiring men of the time: indeed, from his first victory forward, he led the Spanish forces far less in the service of his brother than to carve out a kingdom for himself; and wherever there appeared a prospect of winning a crown, by sword or marriage, thither he turned his attention—intriguing with the Pope, the Guises, the malcontents of England and Flanders, with every one, in fact, who could pretend to further his designs; and in the midst of all he betrayed a still deeper and far more dangerous purpose by hankering after legitimization and the state of an Infant. Philip had long been weary of his brother's foreign intrigues, but he was thoroughly and deeply alarmed so soon as he caught a glimpse of his domestic pretensions. He did not, indeed, cease to employ the prince—that would have been to have given free rein to his ambition—and therefore he ventured to send him to Flanders at a very critical period; but he took good care to place brilliant exploits quite beyond his reach, choosing rather that his own interests should suffer than that Don John should increase his already too great reputation. He surrounded him with spies, instructed his coadjutors to hamper and obstruct him, and starved his means to the last degree. Chafing under such difficulties, the prince lost his temper, and what little prudence he ever had, venting the bitterest complaints against the court and the king, and conceiving the wildest schemes. All this was duly reported to Philip, who in return redoubled his precautions, especially in the matter of espionage. His principal agent in this base business was the Secretary of State, Antonio Perez. Don John and his faithful secretary and counsellor, Juan Escobedo, regarded this man as their truest friend. But devoted body and

soul to the King, or rather to the crown, he volunteered his services as spy upon them, and for several years he filled the disgraceful office like one to the manner born,—so skilfully, indeed, that to the very last he retained the confidence of his dupes. The better to draw them out, as the phrase goes, he entered warmly into their projects, he sympathized with their difficulties, he even penned boldly those harsh opinions of the King which they scarcely ventured to hint, leaving not one nefarious stratagem in the whole art of treachery untried. Every letter he despatched was submitted to his master's eye, and so was every one he received. And he took good care that the monarch's interest in his proceedings should not relax through any subsidence of suspicion, dwelling on every imprudence of prince and secretary, until Philip fully believed that they aimed at no less than his life and crown. And the precious pair justified and encouraged one another in their perfidy—the Minister representing his behaviour as the perfection of duty and conscientious scruple, and the monarch declaring that he should have considered the Minister wanting in duty to his God, no less than to his sovereign, had he acted otherwise. Finding his position altogether insupportable, Don John despatched Escovedo to Spain, in July, 1577, to further his interests in any way, but if possible to procure his recall. This visit Philip regarded with the gravest suspicion and even fear, inscribing the first letter he received from Escovedo with the following remark:—"The avant-courier has arrived. We must be quick and despatch him before he can murder us."

So far Perez had no personal animus against Escovedo. Nor had Escovedo any overt reason to distrust Perez. The contrary, indeed, was the fact. They had been brought up together in the house of Ruy Gomez, the most favoured and fortunate Minister Philip ever had; they had been introduced together to public life, they belonged to the same political faction—a thing which then bound Spaniards together like brotherhood—and, finally, Escovedo owed his present honourable post to the recommendation of Perez. But matters soon occurred which rendered the destruction of the former indispensable to the safety of the latter.

There was then at the Spanish court one of those dames who appeared with something of heroism and a good deal of romance during the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages, but who degenerated into the mere creatures of show, and sense, and selfishness during the Renaissance. This lady—the Duchess of Pastrana and Princess of Eboli—was a worthy sister of those "fair and honest" frailties, Diana de Poitiers and Gabrielle d'Estrees. Married at the age of thirteen to Ruy Gomez, then a man of thirty, she was now a widow, the mistress of vast wealth, and her thirty-eight years had merely ripened her singular levelliness. Nor were her charms a whit impaired by a slight defect (*tuerta*) in one of her eyes. Indeed, a good judge of these matters, Henri Quatre, considered it an additional attraction; "for," said he, "the fitful looks, and drooping lids, and all the other pretty little stratagems to which such beauties have recourse, look bewitchingly like modesty." But even gay and gallant

princes like Francis I. had failed to secure the fidelity of this particular institution; and it was not likely that better fortune would attend a man like Philip, whose mean and gloomy spirit was encased in a body which a Venetian ambassador of the day describes as "*peloso e calvo, e ha le gambe sottili, ed e piccolo di statura meno che di mezzana, e ha la voce grossa*,"* —precisely the terms in which one would sketch a veteran monkey. Accordingly, at the time of Escovedo's reappearance in Spain, the whole court was full of whispers concerning the gay doings of the princess; and the scandal-mongers dwelt with especial unction on her intimacy with Philip's favourite Secretary of State. So far had this been carried that the haughty relatives of the dame—Silvas, Guzmans, and Mendozas, the noblest houses in Spain—seriously meditated the murder of the gallant. And the fondness of the princess was too conspicuous not to give them, in Spanish eyes at least, a reasonable excuse. Mules from her various estates, heavily laden with presents, including money, plate, furniture, and rich stuffs, were continually arriving at the gates of the fortunate Perez. He was her constant attendant at theatre, bull-fight, and auto-da-fe. And in her own palace he was a visitor so frequent and favoured that her very servants—folk not too sensitive in these matters—were, or pretended to be, exceedingly scandalized. "One day," said an indignant cousin, the Marquis of Fabra, "I was stopped at the door and kept waiting among her women, because, forsooth, this fellow Perez was with her. My valet, too, has repeatedly seen him leave her palace by stealth at unseasonable hours. Even worse things have been witnessed by myself and others, her relatives. And such effect has all this had upon me, that I have more than once been compelled to retire to the nearest church to beseech God to deliver me from the strong temptation to slay the villain with which the sight of him possessed me." Escovedo, an cleve of Ruy Gomez, was devoted, with all the enthusiasm of a vassal and a Spaniard, to the house of his chief. He was deeply interested in its fortunes, and keenly alive to everything that touched its honour. One of his first acts was to pay his respects to the princess, and, as his duty required, he was a daily visitor. Of course he soon heard all the gossip, and, in a short time, he obtained the very strongest confirmation of it. Full of indignation, the worthy secretary hastened to speak his mind to the princess. And, altogether regardless of the presence of a third party—the squire of Antonio Perez, who heard and long remembered every word that passed—he indulged the astonished and indignant lady with a very pretty homily, winding up by declaring that he felt himself obliged to recount the whole affair to the King. Unacquainted with the relations that subsisted between Philip and the princess, he could not suspect the apprehension which such a threat from a man, so blunt, so outspoken, and in all respects so exceedingly likely to carry it out, was certain to excite. Bursting with various passions the princess replied, in a

* "*Bald and hairy, with attenuated limbs, stunted figure, and harsh voice.*"

strain of the coarsest defiance, "Off with you to the King! quick! hide nothing! tell him all! And be sure you add this: *mas quiero el trasero de Antonio Perez que al rey.*" From that time forth Escovedo was doomed. The pair knew the character of Philip well. They could not guess how long their secret would be kept, nor when the vengeance might fall; and a hundred small annoyances were ever recurring to keep their apprehension awake. The princess saw Escovedo in every sneering lip, and heard him in every slighting remark. Nay, even when the preacher happened to inveigh against certain sins in her presence, she returned home full of fury to anathematize "that slanderer of noble ladies, Escovedo, who had incited the monks of St. Mary's to interlard their sermons with spiteful things on purpose to annoy her." But of the two Perez had by far the stronger reasons for arriving at a fell resolve. Her rank, her relatives, and—least consideration with Philip, but still a consideration—her sex, forbade the latter to inflict any severe punishment on the princess. But Perez was altogether a creature of his own. Born in 1640, the natural son of one of Charles's Ministers, and legitimated by a diploma of that Emperor's, Antonio Perez was a man of no fortune, and, apart from his office, of little weight. Introduced early to public life, he had gradually worked his way up to the foremost place. Such men, and under such a government, are sure to make numerous enemies, whatever be their character, and the secretary's was of a kind to make him unusually hated. He was handsome, eloquent, and clever; but, the king aside, he was altogether faithless. And he was, besides, profuse, licentious, insolent, and greedy in no common degree. Many of his coadjutors detested him—among them the Iron Duke of Alva. Perez knew this; he knew the slender tenure of his power, and he knew the terrible advantage which his rivals would derive from such a story as that Escovedo had to tell. For him there was no alternative—the man must die. Not was the adroit statesman at a loss for most excellent means of effecting his atrocious intent. It was only necessary that Escovedo should be silent a few days longer. And he was sufficiently so for the purpose. He did not hesitate, indeed, to blurt out pretty freely in a good many places all that he had seen; but some lingering respect for the wife of his old master, friendship perhaps for Perez, and, unquestionably, regard for the interests of his master, restrained him from executing his threat. Meanwhile Perez stacked all his keen intellect on the sinister materials at his command to exasperate the King and Council against the unfortunate agent, and with all the effect that even he could desire: for it was solemnly decided by a Cabinet Council, called especially for the purpose, that, as a matter imperatively called for by the welfare of the State, Escovedo must be put to death. And with such malignant skill had Perez manipulated the evidence submitted to the Council, that its President, the Marquis de los Velos, affirmed himself ready to pronounce for execution with the host between his lips, so deeply was he impressed with the dangerous character of the man Escovedo, and the necessity for his

destruction. But the affairs of state that called thus remorselessly for death were equally urgent in demanding a secret execution—that is to say, an assassination. Philip therefore submitted the decision of his councillors to his excellent confessor, the monk Diego Chaves, and that admirable casuist soon removed whatever small scruples might have lain concealed in the narrow heart of his penitent: "For," said he, "the prince who can justly punish his subjects by law may justly punish them without law, since he is above all law. One subject, therefore, may slay another at the command of his prince without any sin."

Perez was pitched upon to execute the sentence, and the moment he received his commission he proceeded to take his measures. Now these measures were very characteristic of the period. Scarce one of those singular crimes was perpetrated without numerous confidants and assistants. Thus a whole troop was employed to murder the Duke of Orleans in 1407, and a still larger number were associated to massacre the Duke of Burgundy some twelve years later. A host of nobles with one hundred and sixty attendants assembled to slay Rizzio. The murder of Darnley was confided to half the great men of Scotland. And the whole family of the Hamiltons was privy to the slaughter of the Regent Murray. Certainly Perez did not go quite so far as this, but still he went far enough. His major-duomo Diego Martinez, his squire Rodrigo de Morgado, and that, in those days, inevitable official in the establishment of the ambitious—his astrologer Pedro de la Exa, were his more immediate confidants. With them he discussed the projected murder, and by their aid he selected suitable instruments—not paltry scoundrels these, but braves of good birth (*personas de mas partes*), and therefore thoroughly worthy of the respectable office of stabbing a gentleman. It was first resolved to take Escovedo off by poison, and for this they had opportunities in plenty, since the intended victim was a frequent guest of Perez. Nor was the attempt made in the bungling fashion that has become so common of late. It was undertaken as deliberately and elaborately as any other important business. A professional toxicologist—one of a fraternity then very numerous and largely patronized—was fetched all the way from Arragon: an apothecary the witnesses call him—not exactly such a wretch as figures in *Romeo and Juliet*, but a respectable villain. And neither expense nor trouble was spared to give ample scope and verge enough to his skill. Men were despatched in all directions to seek out noxious herbs and potent drugs. And by the time he took his departure well rewarded, he had provided his employer with matters poisonous, in the shape of liquid and powder, sufficient to destroy half Madrid. Out of this infernal arsenal, a liquid "fit to be given to drink," as the narrator quaintly phrases it, was selected for the first essay. But the page, Antonio Enriquez, who was designated to administer it, was not altogether destitute of conscience. "No," said this good youth indignantly, "I will not be a murderer. I abhor the idea of dipping my hands in blood, and, so help me heaven, will have no hand in poisoning anybody—unless my master

give me the order." And give him the order Perez did, accompanied with many promises, sundry politic but very unnecessary reasons, and, what was more to the purpose, "something in hand the whilos." So the conscientious page went away, "much contented," to set about his part of the business. Accordingly, at dinner that very same day he was remarkably assiduous in waiting on Escovedo, and found means to pour a nutshellful of the liquid twice over into the secretary's glass. Dinner over, Escovedo took his leave, and the rest of the company sat down to play: a practice that was indulged in to a scandalous extent by the statesman and his friends. But before Perez could shuffle the cards with any gusto, he had first to be satisfied concerning the administration of the "water fit to be given to drink." This liquid, however, was by no means equal to the *aqua tofana*, afterwards so renowned, or, as seems probable, Escovedo had one of those organizations which resist the assaults of poison, for he appeared to sustain no injury. A few days after he dined again with Perez, and this time they mixed him up a certain white powder like flour with a dish of cream, in addition to his quantum of the "water." He fell ill without guessing the reason, and while he kept his bed another respectable emissary, employed by his excellent friend—the son of Captain Juan Rubio, governor of Mulfi—wormed himself into the confidence of his cook, obtained the run of the kitchen, and managed very cleverly to deposit a thimbleful of the powder in Escovedo's broth. On this occasion the poison was detected before the sick man had tasted more than a mouthful of the food; but so cleverly had Perez managed that nobody entertained the slightest suspicion of his share in the work, and a female slave who had been employed to prepare the pottage was arrested and hung up directly—so quick and decided could the law be at times, even in Spain.

Poison having failed, it was now determined to try steel. So the conscientious page was despatched into his native country, Catalonia, to find "a stiletto with a very thin blade—a weapon far superior to a pistol for murdering a man"—and a sure hand to wield it. And he discharged the mission with great judgment, re-entering Madrid the very day of the slave's execution with the aforesaid delicate tool and his brother Miguel Bosque. Meanwhile, Diego Martinez on his side had procured two determined Arragonese, Gil de Mesa, a devoted adherent of the secretary's, and another ruffian named Insausti. To these were added the scullion, Juan Rubio, already mentioned, and the band was complete. The very next day, being the 24th of March, 1578, the major-duomo mustered his troop of rascals outside of Madrid, and armed them all with pistol and dagger. In addition to these weapons, Martinez, who seems to have had a decided taste for the artistic in matters murderous, presented them with an interesting instrument in the shape of a sword broad-bladed and fluted on both sides up to the point. The tragedy was then planned out and the parts duly apportioned. It was arranged that the whole of the bravos should assemble every even-

ing in the little square of St. Jacobo : from thence they were to go and watch Escovedo's house, and whenever a favourable opportunity offered, do the deed. Insausti, Rubio, and Miguel Bosque were fixed on to strike the stroke, while the other three remained in reserve.

At last, after watching for a week, they met Escovedo, and slew him within twenty yards of his own house, on Easter Monday evening—Insausti dealing the fatal stab with the aforesaid fluted sword. In less than an hour the murder was known from one end of the city to the other. The assassins escaped much as fugitives from the field of battle, several of them losing their weapons, and two their cloaks. The instrument of death, however, had been carried safely off, and was forthwith flung down a deep well. A messenger was despatched to apprise Perez, who had gone to spend the holy week at Alcala. He, when he heard of their success, and especially that nobody had been arrested, rejoiced exceedingly. The next step was to get the murderers out of the way, and that was taken at once. Well supplied with money or the means of obtaining it—Miguel Bosque, for instance, receiving 100 gold crowns, and Gil de Mesa a gold chain, a silver cup, and 400 gold crowns—all but the trusty major-duomo were hurried off to Arragon. There, such of them as were not already provided for otherwise, received each an ensign's commission and departed, Juan Rubio to Milan, Antonio Enriquez to Naples, and Insausti to Sicily. Nor was the prudence of Perez satisfied even then. Time after time, nearly every one upon whom he could not place the thoroughest reliance was put out of the way. The astrologer died suddenly and very opportunely, and so did the squire. Much about the same time Miguel Bosque gave up the ghost in Arragon, and Insausti in Sicily. In three or four years from the date of the crime but four of those who were immediately privy to it survived. Of these, three were as staunch as blood-hounds ; as for the fourth, the conscientious page, he conceived such a terror of the ubiquitous Perez, that he found no rest until he gave himself up in 1584 as an informer.

Escovedo was no more, and Don John did not long survive him, breathing his last exactly six months after, in the centre of his camp near Namur. He died of plague, said one party ; of purple fever, averred another ; worn out with difficulties, disappointment, and vexation, declared a third ; of poison, whispered a fourth. And the last opinion is our own. There remain indeed, to confirm it, no confessions wrung out by torture or remorse, no damning secret instructions, no shameless declarations of defiant wickedness. But there is the character of Philip ; there is the good cause which he had to fear and hate his brother ; and there is the fact, that by the victim's side stood that man of guarded tongue and iron heart, that merciless employer of political assassins, the terrible Duke of Parma. Nor was it merely among the vulgar herd that these dark suspicions flew about. We find them in all the best historians of the day. Bentivoglio

mentions the current belief that the prince's death was more speedy than natural: "E quindi nacque l'opinione dispersa allora, ch' egli mancasse di morte aiutata più tosto che naturale." Cabrera details sundry ugly symptoms noticed during the post-mortem examination. And Herrera says plainly, "Acabo su vida con gran sospecho de veneno,"—"he lost his life with great suspicion of poison.") And if it be objected that these writers expressed themselves too obscurely to justify a decided opinion, we reply with an old anecdote: When that queer character, the Abbe Choisy, was writing the life of Charles VI., the Duke of Burgundy, who took some interest in his labours, asked him how he would contrive to express the madness of that king,—"Sir, I will just say he was mad," replied the abbé; and his audacity in scorning the euphuisms in which matters like this were usually shrouded, out of respect to royalty, gained him no small credit. Now, if it was a ticklish thing to write a dead king down mad in the days of Louis le Grand, it must have been much more ticklish to write one down a poisoner sixty or seventy years earlier.

Escovedo was dead, but never did blood call for vengeance so pertinaciously as his. Thanks to the indiscretion of all the parties concerned, suspicion was at no loss to fix on the murderers. Everybody said at once, Antonio Perez and the Princess of Eboli have done this thing. True, the latter made energetic efforts to turn attention from themselves. They circulated reports to the disadvantage of the slain man. They accused him of low vices, of insulting the wives and daughters of the populace, of indulging in all those propensities that tend to whet the knife of the Spanish plebeian. But to no purpose. Don John's secretary was one of those blunt, straightforward individuals that defy slander. These devices, then, were instantly seen through, and merely tended to strengthen universal opinion. The numerous enemies of the favourites—especially the fellow-Minister of Perez—were delighted with the affair, and they took good care that it should not be forgotten. Incited and supported by powerful personages,—people who as yet kept in the background,—the widow and children of Escovedo openly accused Perez and the princess of the murder. They did more. They demanded and obtained an audience of the King, and besought vengeance on the favourites. Callous as was the age, and prolific of sanguinary characters, there were not many who could have acted like Philip. The trial of Bothwell, a few years before, was a very pretty farce in its way; but for consummate hypocrisy there is nothing in history to be compared to the conduct of the Spanish monarch on this occasion. Such a position would have been torture to a generous spirit; but far from being annoyed, Philip actually appeared to enjoy it. So long as public opinion flowed on like this, he ran no risk of suspicion. That was a great consideration. And another as great lay in the fact that he could use the charge as a sort of mental rack and wheel to lacerate the feelings and break the spirit of these two envied favourites. Obeying the impulses of his mean and cruel nature, he made no attempt to silence the accusers, but listened with deep attention to their

complaints, received their memorials, and promised them all that they could fairly demand—the amplest inquiry. For bold and daring as they were in accusation, as yet they had no other evidence than that suggested by Machiavelli:—If you would discover the author of a crime, inquire who was to profit by it.

No greater punishment could well have been inflicted on the pair than the sixteen months which elapsed between their crime and their disgrace. What had they not to bear in that time? Disappointment of every kind: remorse and fear and outraged feeling within; odium and scorn and degradation without. In vain they struggled to break away from their fate, in vain assailed the throne—the one confident in her rank and her attractions, the other in his precautions, and both in the monarch's complicity. At first they besieged the King for vengeance, then they besought peace, and finally entreated for leave to fly the court—no matter whither. But to every demand their master replied, with his equivocal pledge, "*I will never forsake you.*" Hour by hour their assailants grew bolder—to Philip as well as to themselves—expanding their hints into revelations, and venting their enmity in coarsest insult—like those of Matteo Vasquez, for instance, who scrawled the documents that passed between the offices with denunciations of Perez. And even for this the miserable tool could obtain no redress. He had to bear everything. He dared not strike, he must not reply; he had not even the power of flight, and the bull was baited not a whit the less because forbidden to use his horns. Truly he must have envied Escovedo in his bloody grave.

At length the whole treacherous story was unfolded to the royal ear, and what then? What then, when, after days of study, the perfidy of his favourites and the tool they had made him dawned upon the slow understanding of this "king of men?" With most monarchs of the period a short shrift and a sharp axe would have been the secretary's portion. But this one was incapable of manly vengeance. He delighted to kill indeed, but it must be by instalments. Besides, policy recommended that the comedy should be played yet a little longer—at least until he had sure intelligence that Don John was no more; and as policy never found any difficulty in controlling those lukewarm passions, so the King went on dissembling to both sides, occasionally interfering to restrain the eagerness of the assailants with hypocritical censure, and to support the assailed with equally hypocritical comfort. The desired intelligence came at last; but even then he was not ready to strike. He could not punish the princess and spare the paramour, and before he could disgrace the latter it was necessary to provide a successor. Nor was this quite so easy as might be supposed. For, though there were many men in Spain fully qualified by ability for the post, there was not one who could adapt himself similarly to the disposition of the King. Therefore, in January, 1579, Cardinal Granville was summoned from Italy; but though he set out at once, he was delayed by various accidents until full six months went by before he set foot in Spain. Meanwhile, Philip, with his usual duplicity, set himself to manufacture a

excuse sufficiently plausible to account to those not behind the scenes for the disgrace of the favourites when the proper time should come; so, pretending to be wearied out with the everlasting complaints of the contending parties, he commanded them all to be reconciled. This was precisely what Vasquez and his friends did not want. Yet they dared not openly resist the King, who was as much an enigma to them as he was to their opponents. But though they appeared to acquiesce, they abated not one jot of their studied insolence and aggression. As for Perez and the princess, they obstinately refused all reconciliation, as doubtless it was intended they should. Indeed, the irritating conduct of their antagonists rendered any other course too humiliating to be thought of, unless in the very last extremity; and, considering that this model king was still in all outward respects the same to both as he had been for years before—still the apparently confiding, caressing master of the secretary, and still—yes, still, astonishing as it may appear—the lover of the princess!—that extremity appeared sufficiently distant. At length some unusual whiff of spite lifted for one short moment the heavy folds of dissimulation that enveloped this strange spirit, and gave the guilty ones a glimpse of the purpose that crouched in its gloomy recesses, and they consented, with much reluctance and many a bitter pang, “to swear a peace.” The 29th of July was fixed upon for this ceremony; and, now that they had subdued their pride so far, the harassed pair felt a relief that must have been something like happiness. But one short step divided them from security, and their feet were lifted to make it, when the ground that looked so firm melted like a mist, and down they went. Granville arrived on the 28th, and at eleven o'clock that night Philip issued his orders for the instant arrest of the princess and the secretary. The latter was at once taken into custody by the court alcalde, and the former was seized at the same instant and conveyed to the fortress of Pinto. The King himself, hidden under the porch of a neighbouring church, witnessed the capture of his mistress; and when she was borne out of his sight, when the darkness swallowed up the guarded coach, and the trample of the horses died away from his ear, he retired in frowning silence to the palace, and spent the remainder of the night in pacing his cabinet—a demonstration of feeling never observed in him before or after.

From this time forward the princess disappears from the scene, and Perez occupies the whole width of the stage. For no less than twelve years we see him sinking lower and lower under the pertinacious assault of a revenge that loved to linger on its blows, and shrank from striking home. The slow progress of the law in those days, especially when put in motion against the rich and strong, the great events that occurred during the time, and the habits of Philip, who regularly spent twelve hours a day at the desk, reading every despatch and every petition, and obstructing the multitudinous affairs of his wide dominions by attempting to direct them every one—these may be credited with a portion of this extraordinary delay. But by far the larger part must be ascribed to the

skill with which the secretary had entangled his master in their mutual crime, and to the powers of defence, as unexpected as they were formidable, which adversity developed in him. For a long time Philip could not kill without seriously wounding himself; and, when at last his hand was free to stab, the object was no longer within reach. Philip was an inveterate scribe, who discussed *every* subject with his pen, and heaps of documents which committed him in a thousand things, notably in this affair of Escovedo's, were in the possession of Perez. The latter, therefore, was not to be dealt with seriously until they had deprived him of his armour of proof, and that was not the work of a moment. Not knowing well what to do with him, after a confinement of four months in the house of the alcalde, they allowed him to return home, and there he remained for the next six years under the very mildest form of arrest; frequenting every place of amusement, receiving visitors, indulging to the top of his bent in all his old profusion, and doing his utmost to work his way back into power. It was at last suggested that the ex-secretary might fairly be prosecuted for malversation: and such an inquiry was at once set on foot. It opened in May, 1582, and lasted until January, 1585. During its course it was clearly proved that Perez had been in the pay of most of the petty princes of Italy, that he had sold offices—captaincies, governments, and commissions—innumerable, and that he had received bribes from all sorts of suitors until he, a man absolutely without hereditary fortune, came to outshine in all respects—jewels, house, and retinue—the most magnificent of the Spanish nobility. Nor did the commissioners confine their inquiries to matters like these. A great portion of their time was occupied in prying into his connection with the Princess of Eboli; and their labours were concluded by sentencing the ex-Minister to reimburse the Eboli family to the amount of 7,000*l.* or 8,000*l.*, for the presents which he had received from the princess; to pay a fine of equal amount to the King; to be imprisoned for two years in a fortress; and to be banished for ten years from the court. Most people fancied that this was the end of the dreary affair; but it proved to be merely the beginning. The moment the gates of Torruégano closed behind him, his foes set to work to secure his papers. These were demanded from his wife; she refused to give them up. They imprisoned her, and as she still refused, threatened her with the harshest treatment; but she remained inflexible. Her liberty, however, was indispensable to Perez, for she was his principal agent, and a most enthusiastic and faithful one she remained to the last. So he consented to ransom her by surrendering the coveted documents. Accordingly he obtained a safe-conduct for the trusty Diego Martinez, who had vanished on his master's disgrace; and this man delivered two trunks locked and sealed into the hands of the King's confessor. Great was Philip's triumph. He felt that his vengeance had now at last full scope—not knowing that Martinez had carefully sifted the papers and abstracted the most valuable. He had ruined Perez, but that was nothing to what he meditated. The ex-secretary had served his own purpose

in the matter of Escovedo, and now the King would very similarly serve his in this same matter by bringing Perez to the gibbet for it. Never was there a better verification of the text, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again." So it was determined to prosecute Perez at once for the murder. His business done, the major-duomo prepared to return to his refuge. But the court had no notion of parting with him so easily. Two years had worn away in this struggle for the documents, and 1587 was drawing to a close. Vasquez and his confederates had already got hold of one formidable witness, the conscientious page. But a second was indispensable to secure conviction, and they had long been in search of one. They knew that the poison-vendor and the scullion were somewhere in Arragon, and they had made many vigorous efforts—some of them not very honourable—to get possession of one or other. But the trusty Gil de Meza took good care to frustrate every attempt. Another—and if he would but speak, the most valuable of all—was now within their grasp; and, in spite of the safe-conduct, it closed tightly upon him. But Martinez was a very different sort of man to Enriquez; and when the two were confronted, he assailed the ex-page with such a torrent of invective as absolutely struck him dumb. Threaten, cajole, or torture as they would, they could get nothing out of this faithful man, and so they were again at a standstill. But neither Philip nor his creatures would accept defeat; and since they could not obtain the requisite testimony by other means, it was determined to extract it by fraud or force from Perez himself. And fraud, as the more congenial engine, was the first to be employed. Accordingly the ever-ready confessor, Chaves, came forward and penned long letters to Perez, full of equivocation, casuistry, every kind of negative falsehood, and all sorts of base arguments, as inducements to confession. But Perez was too old a bird to be caught with chaff like that. So another and a deeper scheme was devised to train the unhappy statesman to his ruin. Meanwhile all honourable men revolted at these long and perfidious proceedings. They loved not Perez indeed, but, on the other hand, they hated the means that were being used for his destruction. So, having remonstrated in vain with the King, they put themselves in communication with the Escovedos, and soon induced these people to come to terms with the ex-secretary, the more easily as the former clearly saw that however the case went, it was not likely to benefit them. In consideration, then, of receiving 20,000 ducats, they retired from the prosecution, October 2, 1589; and, so far as the principals were concerned, the proceedings were at an end. This event, however, did not influence Philip or his advisers for a moment. Still intent on tempting Perez to criminate himself, they drew up a document to the following effect—"That Antonio Perez acted by the will and consent of his Majesty in the murder of Juan Escovedo; that it was necessary that this consent should be declared and its causes explained in order to aid the discharge of the prisoner; and that his Majesty permitted Antonio Perez to declare and explain these things accordingly." This document, signed by the King, and fortified by all the

arguments they could devise, was placed before Perez no less than seven different times in January and February, 1590. But he still refused to commit himself. Fraud had failed utterly, and now nothing remained but force. On the 22nd of February, therefore, Perez was put to the torture, and that so mercilessly that it was evident they meant to rend him limb from limb should he still refuse to confess. At last after unusual endurance he consented to open his stubborn lips, and acknowledge the murder; but to the last he represented the deed as a pure affair of state, and himself as the docile instrument of the King.

The disgrace of Perez, his ruin, his imprisonment, and finally his torture, might all have been witnessed, not merely without sympathy, but even with general approval, had they followed hard upon the heels of his crime. But thus studiously prolonged through half a generation, they begat a general revulsion of feeling which the last act brought to a climax. "What!" said the courtiers, "a noble, a minister of state, an intimate of the King's, tortured like a common thief! and wherefore?" Henceforth no one felt safe. And so boldly were the murmurs uttered that they were heard even from the pulpit of the royal chapel. Indeed from that 22nd of February forward, Perez had no enemies in Spain but the King and a few of his Majesty's familiars. Under these circumstances it would have been imprudent to have hurried to the last act of the tragedy. Besides, Perez was prostrated with fever brought on by bodily and mental anguish: and partly in deference to public opinion, partly to preserve him for the gibbet, his wife and friends were allowed access to his cell. Hovering between life and death, as he seemed to be for weeks, the vigilance of his gaolers relaxed, and on the night of the 20th of April, he managed to escape, like the Earl of Nithsdale and Lavalette, in the dress of his wife. The devoted Gil de Meza was waiting close at hand with horses, and mounting along with him, Perez never drew bridle until he reached Arragon, after a ride of thirty Spanish leagues. There, thanks to the peculiar laws of the country, he was safe. But he did not rely implicitly upon them, and took sanctuary at Calatayud, in the convent of St. Peter the Martyr. All rejoiced but the King, and he, for once in his life, was furious. He cast the whole of the Perez family into prison, not sparing even the infants, nor did they come out again for many a long year. He despatched an order into Arragon commanding his officers to seize the fugitive alive or dead. And he hurried on the proceedings of the court at Madrid, which, in the astonishingly short period of three months, published its sentence, condemning Perez to be hanged; his head to be fixed on a spike, and his whole property to be confiscated:

Meanwhile, a terrible drama was going on in Arragon. The officers of the King attempted to drag Perez from his asylum; and the officers of the kingdom—a very different body of men—roused by the indefatigable Gil de Meza, marched in hot haste from Saragossa to protect him. Backed by the people; who knew how to value their laws, the latter prevailed; and carrying Perez with them to the capital, immured him, as one

charged with high crimes and misdemeanors, but really for his safety, in the public prison. There Philip commenced proceedings against him according to the forms of the country, charging him with murdering Escovedo, betraying State secrets, and breaking out of prison. But Philip soon became aware of two extremely disagreeable things: in the first place, that nobody could be condemned in Arragon without a really fair trial, in open court, and before an independent tribunal; and in the second place, that Perez had withheld a number of terribly significant documents: consequently these charges were soon abandoned. But not so the trial. He was next arraigned for poisoning his squire and his astrologer; and when this charge broke down, as it did speedily for lack of evidence, he was immediately accused of malversation in his office, and application was made to have the trial transferred to the King's court. But Perez had no difficulty in proving that the law under which this application was made applied only to such officers as had been employed at the period of their offence in Arragon, and so this last attempt failed even more signally than the others. But one resort was now left to the vindictive King, and that was to bring Perez under the terrible jurisdiction of the Inquisition. Now Perez, like most men of the South, was accustomed to speak strongly under excitement, dealing with sacred things in a way that is common enough in Spain and Italy, but which bears to us Englishmen a most uncomfortable seeming of blasphemy. And selections from his conversation of this stamp were committed to writing, and transmitted to that master casuist, Chaves, who soon managed to distil from them the rankest heresy, after the form and manner following:—Antonio Perez being requested not to speak ill of Don John of Austria, made this reply:—"Since the King has accused me of betraying his secrets and garbling his letters, I must justify myself without reference to other people, and if God the Father obstructed me in my way, I would cut off his nose." Remarks like this might have been heard a hundred times a day in Madrid, without exciting any sensation. But Chaves cared nothing for that; it was a part of his business to find heresy anywhere at a moment's notice, and it must be confessed that he was master of his craft. "This proposition," wrote he, "inasmuch as it says, If God the Father was a hindrance he would have his nose cut off, savours of the heresy of the Vaudois, who pretend that God is human and has corporeal members. Nor can it be urged in excuse that Christ has a body and members, since the question here is not concerning Christ, but the first person of the Holy Trinity." In this way Chaves, with the help of some reading, a great want of scruple, and a little ingenuity, soon made out Perez, as he would have made out any one else, a heretic of the very deepest dye. Fortified by this precious opinion the inquisitors of Saragossa decided that Perez should be committed to their private prison; but this was far more easily said than done. The Arragonese had little love for the Inquisition; they were jealous of their boasted *fueros* (laws), and at that particular juncture Perez was everywhere regarded as representing

these *fueros* in all their power and purity. Besides, Perez had several old friends in Saragossa, and since his arrival he had made a good many new ones; and these were always on the watch to rouse the mob on the first indication of treachery or violence on the part of the royal agents. Nor was their care at all superfluous; for Philip had many adroit agents in the city, notably the Marquis of Almenara. Indeed, from the moment Perez set foot in the kingdom, the marquis, as in duty bound, had been busy intriguing against him, and had managed at last to gain over some of the principal magistrates, at least so far as to agree that the fugitive should be handed over to the officers of the Inquisition. They would not, indeed, allow Perez to be spirited away at night, or without the forms of law. But they made the matter nearly as safe. The alguacils came before them at an unusually early hour, got possession of the prisoner, and were in the very act of carrying him off when they were noticed by three gentlemen devoted to Perez. These, however, were not prepared to stay them, and so in a very short time the much-hunted prisoner was secure in the strong fortress of the Aljaferia. The Inquisition had him fast, but it did not keep him long. Meantime Saragossa was all astir as it had not been for many a day before. "Contra fuero," "Liberty," "To the rescue,"—well-known signals all of riot and rebellion, rang in every direction, and, with the loud clang of the tocsin, soon roused up the city and filled the market-place in front of the prison with a mighty mob. A few words from one of the adherents of Perez divided this mob into two. The one streamed rapidly out of the city towards the Aljaferia, and the other hurried off to the palace of the Marquis of Almenara, who was rightly credited with the mischief. The Marquis shut his gates, and well he might, for the crowd was about as ugly a one as ever threatened an unpopular gentleman. Great stones, sledge hammers, and arquebus-shots were hurled in plenty at his doors; but these, constructed in the stormy days of the Beamonts and Agramonts, resisted the onset well. The mob, however, got in at last by stratagem, and seized their prey. With the view of saving his life—not worth many days' purchase just then—somebody proposed that he should be led to prison, and the multitude as usual agreed with the last speaker. But the leading rioters did not mean that he should escape, and before they had got a furlong on the way a terrible cry was raised and taken up by nearly every voice: "Body of God, kill him, kill him!" ("*Muera, cuerpo de Dios!*"). And no sooner said than done: he was struck and trampled on in an instant, and would have been slain outright but for the gallant interference of a few gentlemen, who charged through the tumult and dragged the marquis by main force from under the heels of his assailants, all battered and bloody, to die a fortnight after of his wounds. As in all similar cases, the taste of blood rendered the rioters altogether ungovernable. Fortunately for themselves, Philip's creatures were soon close in hiding, and having no one else upon whom to vent their wrath, the mob surrounded the palace of justice, and yelling, threatening, brandishing pike and arquebus, and frequently discharging shots in alarming proximity to the ears of those pale

and learned pundits, they kept the magistrates in mortal terror for three or four long hours. As for the other division, it had failed to storm the Aljaferia. And there it remained, surging against the massy walls and yelling furiously. But confident in their stronghold, the inquisitors within paid them little attention. The leaders of the crowd indeed had sent for cart-loads of wood to burn down the gates, but before this expedient could be tried the prisoner was free. Messenger after messenger, each more pressing than the other, galloped from the city and besought his release as the only means of averting a general massacre. And the inquisitors, unwilling to make themselves responsible for such a catastrophe, at last, but very reluctantly and with many anathemas, consented. Perez was borne back to the city in triumph, and deposited in his old quarters, and the mob dispersed without doing further mischief. The magisterial costume, however, stood in sad need of repairs after that day's work.

Philip never did anything in a hurry, and besides, he had just then quite enough upon his hands—including three great wars, half-a-dozen little ones, and several rebellions. Neither would it have been wise to have thrown such a people as the Arragonese into the hands of Henry IV., as he might have done very easily had he ventured on strong measures while their blood was up. For he knew right well that Perez—this man whom he himself had rendered so desperate and dangerous—had formed a large party among the younger nobles; that he was plotting to sever Arragon from the Spanish crown—as a republic, a kingdom, anything so that it should no longer obey the rule of the hated Philip; and that he had already begun to take measures for securing such support as France could give. He resolved, therefore, to compromise matters, and the Arragonese were disposed to meet him at least half way. The wiser among them were alarmed by the projects of Perez; they knew that during three long, and so far constitutional reigns, the people had lost their warlike habits; and they were perfectly aware of the overwhelming force which Philip could direct against them. But though inclined to overlook the riot, the latter was now more than ever determined to get Perez into his hands, or what was much the same thing, into the claws of the Inquisition. And the Arragonian lawyers, eager to conciliate the monarch, soon found out a way of evading the *fueros*. In vain Perez scattered inflammatory pamphlets and broadsheets by thousands among the people, for he was a ready and trenchant writer; in vain he protested against the legal decision, and appealed to the generous feelings of the people. Fierce feelings had by this time cooled down, and while many of his own adherents fell away altogether, and more became lukewarm, a strong party among the upper classes declared dead against him. So, paying little attention to his petitions and his pamphlets, the authorities went on with their preparations for transferring him quietly to the Inquisition. Hopeless of all other means, Perez then attempted to break out of prison. He procured a file and worked for three nights at the grating of his cell; but he was betrayed in the very moment of success, and removed to a stronger

dungeon. Then, at last, his hitherto irrepressible spirit sank, and for the next few days he sat cowering in a corner, begirt by threatening phantoms. His surrender was fixed for the 24th of September, 1491, and on the 20th one of the Inquisitors wrote, exulting, "that there was no longer any danger to be dreaded, since the nobles were mostly gained and the common people would be too busy with the vintage to interfere." At eleven o'clock on the day appointed, the authorities, attended by a troop of arquebusiers and the governor at the head of his guards, set out for the prison. At the palace of the viceroy they were joined by a great many lords and gentlemen, with their vassals at their backs, all completely armed. On they went to the market-place, which, as well as the principal streets, had been lined with troops ever since daybreak. As yet all had gone well, the spectators looked calmly on, and neither sign nor sound betokened an outbreak. Perez was being fettered previous to his removal to the carriage that was to carry him off, and the authorities were in the act of congratulating one another on their easy success, when a roar as of many waters burst upon their ears. It grew louder and nearer, and in a twinkling the troops that had guarded the streets were hurled into the square, followed close by a furious mob in full rebellion. The indefatigable Gil de Meza and a few more steady friends were at its head. Without a moment's hesitation they charged the squadrons drawn up before the prison door, and these, Arragonese all, with little heart for the business in hand, took to their heels. Noble and vassal followed their excellent example, some flying through the narrow streets, some over the housetops, and in ten minutes more Perez was on horseback, riding at top speed for the Pyrenees. He made no attempt, however, to cross, for this last event had given new life to his dark schemes, and so in a day or two he went back to hiding in Saragossa.

The last act of the tragedy began. The authorities hastened to exculpate themselves, enlarging on their devotion to the royal cause and on the risks they had encountered. Philip listened quietly to these excuses. A deputation came to sue for a pardon. He received it without anger and dismissed it without a threat. But he gathered rapidly a powerful force on the frontiers of Arragon, under the command of a thoroughly trusty chief, Don Alonzo de Vargas. Much alarmed, the Cortes met in haste, and if words could avail to avert the perils that threatened, Arragon would have been safe, for so far as words could go, the Cortes took every possible precaution. They remonstrated with and threatened the King; preached union and patriotism to the people; and condemned Vargas and his men to death should they dare to enter the kingdom. Philip did not attach much value to all this bluster. But he dissembled and prevaricated, as usual, to the last. The army, he said, was intended for France; their privileges ran no risk; he always meant to maintain their *fueros* strictly inviolate, and so forth. But still the troops marched on. Perez, though in hiding, was not idle, and the Arragonese were not all demented: so the irresolute legislature was at last induced to take some positive measures

for defence. But these were precisely such as might have been expected. As Vargas approached Saragossa a small and untrained force under timorous chiefs marched out with faltering steps and slow to oppose him ; but as soon as this precious band came in sight of the royal army, the captains turned their backs and ran away without ceremony, and as a matter of course the rank and file dispersed in disorder. Vargas occupied the city without opposition on the 12th of November, and Perez, flying over the Pyrenees this time, reached Bearn the same day in company with all those who were not stricken with judicial blindness. For more than a month everything went on smoothly. Negotiators passed to and fro, the Arragonese addressing and Philip replying after the old fashion. Meanwhile, not a single arrest was made, though the city was occupied by 15,000 veterans. At last the pent-up torrent of vengeance was let loose. On the 18th of December, Don Gomez Vasques, the Royal Commissioner, and his worthy coadjutor Dr. Lanzi, the Jeffries of Arragon, reached Saragossa, and before the day was over every prison in the place was filled to overflowing. And they were emptied just as fast. The commander of the army that did not fight was the first to die, being beheaded without trial within six hours of his arrest, and for days the headman's axe was never for an instant at rest. Every one, high or low, who could by any quibble be brought within his reach, Lanzi sent to death : the very executioner was hung by his assistant. Royal vengeance was sated at last. And then that of the Inquisition had its turn. But so many of its destined victims had already fallen, that with all their industry its emissaries could condemn no more than a paltry group numbering seventy-nine. Early on the morning of the 20th of October, 1592, so quick had time rolled on, this doleful band was led to the market-place, the effigy of Perez figuring conspicuously in the procession, and the unholy sacrifice began ; it lasted all through the day and closed only by torchlight at nine in the evening, after thirteen hours' incessant slaughter. So soon as death was glutted, Philip published a proscription under the title of an amnesty. One hundred and nineteen persons by name, all the priests and monks who had shared in the insurrection, all the lawyers who had declared for defence, all the captains who had marched against his troops, and all the ensigns who had borne banners were placed beyond the pale of the law. As for the *fueros*, we hear of them no more, they were blotted out with blood. And Antonio Perez ? Distrusted wherever he went, pining for his family, loathing exile, hankering to the last after power and always disappointed, never out of penury, sometimes in absolute want, he wandered restlessly to and fro on the face of the earth for another twenty years, dying at last, an utterly broken man, in the arms of the faithful Gil de Mesa.

Lettice Winsle.

CHAPTER V.

FATHER AND SON.

It was nearly ten years since Edward had departed. Ten years makes but little difference in people of a certain age: Amyas and Mrs. Wynyate were neither of them much altered; the wrinkles in her face were a little more numerous, and the furrows of care deeper in his, but this was all; Job and John had remained exactly what they were, though John had sought his fortunes elsewhere; but to Lettice the change had been one from a child to a woman, and Edward had become a trustworthy officer of his Majesty's Revenue Department.

Things had gone on much the same at the Woodhouse. A good deal more timber had been cut, the money-lender had been down more than once upon Amyas; but he had contrived hitherto to keep, not his whole head perhaps, but at least his eyes and nose, as it were, out of water.

But the years had been bad, the interest accumulating, and this summer Wallcott, with wrath in his soul, was again riding up the hollow lane on his road to the Woodhouse. He was not alone this time: he had brought his son with him; and as they rode along together he expounded his schemes to the young man—who did not seem to take the smallest interest in them, but was gazing with much fervour into all the hedges and ditches as he passed, his whole attention engaged upon the plants and insects there.

"And now," said his father, "I shan't go on any more after this fashion: I've had patience too long. I've just bought up the last bit o' the mortgage, and I shall foreclose for certain sure. It's as pretty a bit of property as there is about: just look at the trees: shows what land it is if it were made anything like proper use of."

Everhard *was* looking at the trees, and with great attention.

"I never saw so old a hornbeam," said he; "and those twisted roots of the pollard-oak that grow down into the lane—why, they're as big as trunks!"

"I wasn't talking of that rubbish," answered his father, testily; "I meant the large elm above—as good a stick of timber as ever I saw grown."

"Yes," said his son, dreamily looking round, "it is a beautiful place."

The dark lane was fringed with exquisite ferns : bright pink lichens and blue harebells shone out between ; it was hung with wreaths of wild hop, briony, and honeysuckle : nothing could be more lovely.

"And there's that rare vetch ! 'I never saw it growing before," added he, catching sight of a flower, "and such a sphinx butterfly."

"You're enough to drive a man mad, lad, I declare ! I'm talking about business to you, and you go off about a lot of stupid weeds and flies of no use nor signification whatever except to a stupid nincompoop like you !" said Wallcott, angrily.

Everhard was silent, and followed his father as he rode in once more at the field-gate.

"What a pretty spot," said he, admiringly, as they crossed the meadow and looked over the waving trees in the dell to the pool at the bottom, and the peeps at blue distances over the brow on the other side.

"Well, I'm glad you've sense enough to see *that*," answered his father, a little soothed.

"And six butterfly orchises together, I declare !" muttered Everhard to himself, luckily unheard.

They rode on towards the house.

"I've bought this last lot of timber standing—under Filmer's name—not to be cut till called for," observed Wallcott. "It won't do to strip the place ; it'll bring its money better with the trees growing, than they'd fetch if they were down."

"I never saw anything prettier than it is," answered his son, enthusiastically, as they rode along up the old avenue.

"Well, I'm pleased you think so much on it," said his gratified father. "I've never telled ye on it before, but it's yer mother's money mostly as is set on it, and I've been thinking as p'r'aps we might keep it and come and live here ourselves when it falls in some time. If ever I got tired of business, it 'ud make a nice box ; and there's capital fishing for you if it were preserved—it's some of the best water in the country : it'll be dirt cheap, after all, considering everything."

"What, does the land run down to the river ?" inquired Everhard eagerly. He was an ardent angler, and it was the first time that he had seemed to understand what his father was driving at : they generally, indeed, talked and thought in two parallel lines, which never touched each other at any one point.

Old Wallcott was the owner of a small paper-mill on the little river, where it ran through the cathedral town some fifteen miles away ; but new inventions had come in since the war—there had been some difficulty about the water, and the business had gradually been suffered to go to decay. He had married for the second time a widow with some property, and employed his superfluous energies, which were great, in lending money in small sums and at high interest up and down the country. The Wood-house was by far the largest of his ventures ; he had gradually possessed

himself of the other mortgages on the property, and the net was fast closing in, as poor Amyas's chance of repaying became smaller every year.

Everhard was a curious son of the old money-lender; but nature seems often to indemnify herself for over-exertion in one generation by a contrary extreme in the next. He was fond of beasts, and birds, and flowers, and insects—"bug-hunting,"* as it was irreverently called in the shipowner's office where he was at work. He had that amount of poetic instinct which enables a man to see with his eyes and hear with his ears what nature is doing, and having been a weakly child, the last survivor of many, his father had impatiently endured these most unnatural, absurd tastes as some of Everhard's "maggots."

In right, too, of his weakness, he had spent most of his time near the sea at his grandfather's, where his mother had persuaded the old curate of the village to look after his education. Mr. Denver, however, had infused a very small quantity of useful knowledge into the lad—whom he taught as a great favour—and a large amount of the natural history and geology which interested himself: all the things, in short, which were considered in those days most "useless and out of the way;" and Wallcott uttered deep sighs whenever he thought of the waste of the good money upon "such a lot of ridiculous nonsense."

"If I'd ever known Mr. Denver's head was addled after such like rubbish," grumbled he, "Everhard shouldn't never ha' gone nigh him."

"But he's got his health," said his mother, who, with a puzzled, awe-struck respect for her son's education, was nearly as much disappointed as her husband at the turn it had taken. "He's grown quite strong and hearty, and eats his vittles as well as e'er a gentlefolk of 'um."

"I should like to know how ever he's to earn his living," groaned his father. "Yer cousin a took he into his office, but he'll never do nothing at the work! He knows no more about getting money nor Lord Hopton's son," added he with a dismal pride.

"At all events them things don't spend it," said his mother consolingly. "And what for, ye know, did ye have him called Everhard (such an out-of-the-way name) if ye didn't want to make a gentleman of him?" added she with a sort of sigh; for, after all, she felt that her son was drifting a long way from her, and she had begun to suffer from the gulf which a great difference of education between parent and child inevitably brings with it, even with the most affectionate intentions.

Meantime the father and son rode on together, and the old wood-yard at last opened upon them, with the deep dark shadows lying across it. A peacock sat sunning himself on a red cart, and all kinds of living things were enjoying themselves sleepily in the bright summer's day.

"Hey, I say, who's at home? come out, somebody!" cried Wallcott somewhat consequentially before the porch, as became an owner *in petto*. "Get off, Everhard," said he as he threw his own still active leg off the

* Insects of all kinds are "bugs."

saddle. They fastened their horses to the broken fence and went in. As before, Mrs. Wynyate stood at the door.

"Amyas is not in," said she shortly, as Wallcott made his way past her into the hall.

"Well, Mrs. Wynyate, he never is when I call! I can't think what he fancies I'm made on—sugar, I suppose, to melt in his mouth—that he's to go on in this fashion with arrears, and the interest on arrears—compound interest."

"He's in the wood close; I'll send for him if you wish to speak with him," replied she, without moving a muscle.

"No; I'll go to him myself, and see what the crops are like with my own eyes. Come, Everhard," said he, looking over his shoulder, as he turned on his heel, followed by Mrs. Wynyate.

But Everhard did not seem to hear.

The large low old room, with its panelled walls and ornamental ceiling, half hall, half kitchen, was cool and pleasant coming out of the hot glaring June day: a dark oak screen shut it in from the entrance, against which were fastened some branching antlers; a leathern jack hung from one of these: a rusty helmet, matchlock, and partizan were laid across the rest, a bad portrait or two were against the walls, and a great tankard of old blue china stood above some polished carved black furniture. It struck the young man's sense of beauty, or rather it all served as a becoming frame to the picture in his mind, which he remembered unconsciously afterwards.

At the other end of the room, just risen from her place in the old-fashioned window-seat, stood Lettice, with her work in her hand: the sunshine, subdued by the latticed windows, and the vine and jessamine leaves outside, threw changing shadows upon the pure lines of her face, the clear soft complexion, a little pale, the long dark eyelashes and soft eyes: there was a peculiarly tender, delicate expression about her whole manner and appearance.

"She looks like a white violet," said the young man to himself.

There was metal more attractive here than quarrelling about compound interest out of doors. Instead of following his father and Mrs. Wynyate, the young man walked straight up to her, drawn on as if he could not help himself.

"I hope Mr. Wallcott is not going to be angry with uncle Amyas," said she, gravely and anxiously, looking after them without the least shyness, and quite unconscious of the expression in the young man's eyes.

"I believe Mr. Wynyate has been behindhand with his money lately," answered he, with sudden interest in the mortgage, and trying to remember what his father had said about it; but it was so jumbled up in his mind with a host of like transactions, with which he had always been infinitely bored, that his recollections were of the most hazy description.

"Uncle Amyas is so good to everybody," said the girl, with tears in her eyes, "and so just. I'm sure he'd pay if he could."

Everhard had no time to explain that these were not the usual terms on which money was lent in the world, even if he had wished it, for at that moment the horses outside began to bite and kick each other, and a loud neigh of complaint came from the aggressor (as usual), who had begun the fray and was least hurt.

"Oughtn't they to be put into the stable?" said Lettice, looking out through the "quarrels" of the lattice. "They'll hurt each other, I'm afraid." And taking up the little sun-bonnet by her side, she went out, followed by Everhard, undid the reins of the nearest to her, and led the way into an empty stable, lower down in the farmyard.

"I'm glad it was my horse she got hold of instead of father's," said the young man to himself.

He fastened them both up. "Shall I give them a lock of fresh hay?" said she, going to a laden waggon which had just been brought in. No one was to be seen about the farmyard: all the world wore away in the hay-field, and she carried in an armful of the scented grass to the manger. There was a little wicket-gate opposite the place where they were standing, arched in with great "snowballs" and sweet-smelling lilacs, which led into the orchard.

"May I go into that cool place?" said he, turning from the glare. The sun shone fiercely between the barns and brick walls of the outhouses.

They passed together into the shady silent orchard, girdled in with great trees, and with the rich luxuriant vegetation which is so striking in the southern counties of England. Two little milk-white calves, with soft dark eyes, came running up to her, and rubbed affectionately against her shoulder.

"They're very fond of me," said Lettice, apologetically, putting her arms round one of them.

"I dare say they are," said the young man in a very convinced tone.

Lettice had lived all her life chiefly with men, and was not in the least shy with them; but this was quite a new variety of the species: she did not understand what he could mean, and looked up surprised.

"I feed them with milk, you know," she said simply, explaining.

"I don't think that's the reason," answered he; "we seem to think beasts care for nothing but their stomachs. A dog loves his master best, though other people may feed him; and even bees have their likes and dislikes. Don't they sting one person, and let another do what he pleases?"

"Yes," observed Lettice, thoughtfully. "The hives always sting granny, and they let me come quite nigh when they're swarming even."

He smiled. "People talk a great deal of rubbish about the difference between reason and instinct," said the young man warmly, growing grand, pragmatical, and instructive with such an exceptionally attentive listener. "I should like to know where they draw their line, and what's the difference between an elephant and a stupid man that isn't to the elephant's advantage."

Lettice listened with the utmost reverence : it was "beautiful," she thought, to hear such talk. Uncle Amyas was very clever and very kind, but he had grown very silent of late with the weight of his anxieties, and besides, his discourse was never half so fine as this. She had never heard anything of the kind before : observations on isolated facts were chiefly dealt with at the Woodhouse.

They walked on into the orchard, green and still in its deep shade, full of the hush of the hot June day, with nothing stirring but a buzzing beetle : even the birds were silent with the heat—the exquisite shadows of the great trees were thrown across the sward, the brilliant lights gleaming on a bunch of May in one direction, or the golden cluster of laburnum in another. Through the tall trunks were peeps at the little dark pools in the dell beneath—the ancient fish-ponds of old Catholic days : three of which lay one below the other at the bottom of a steep descent, cool and delicious to look at, in the midst of a wide tangle of hollies and oak and hawthorn, hung with travellers'-joy and honeysuckle, while the tall fox-gloves grew in groups with a sort of stately grace, and were reflected in the water.

"What a pleasant place," said Everhard, with much enthusiasm ; "and it's so hot and hard and dusty in the world outside."

They strolled on in and out of the shadows.

"What enormous nests those are up in the high elms yonder," said he.

"The herons build in those trees," answered Lettice, shyly.

"There aren't above a dozen heronries in all England, I believe," cried he, with great interest, as he went on artfully extracting all the lore concerning the birds, beasts, and fish of the Woodhouse which the departed Edward had so carefully instilled into his niece in the past days.

They turned home again by a favourite haunt of Lettice's, shut in by a great cedar-tree, one of the relics of the past glories of the place, where a few straggling flowers grew in a quiet nook sheltered by the old brick wall of the neglected kitchen-garden, with its curiously moulded coping, the rich shades of dark red variegated with lichen, half hidden under showers of clematis and ivy, and where the air was murmurous with bees. The wind, soft and low, began to breath in the tall tree tops above their heads with a soothing ripple of sound.

"It's so nice and quiet here to come to," said she, "like a sort o' nest, and they all, the birds and bees, seem to say such pretty things."

He did not answer except with a smile. She looked very much in keeping with it all : it was a very harmonious "song without words," and required none, he felt. A tall white rose-tree was blooming high in the air above their heads as they stood : the hay had just been cut in the orchard and lay in fragrant swathes under the apple-trees, besides which

What's lovelier than the new-blown rose ?

What's sweeter than the new-mown clove ?

The breath of love.

says the old Handel duet, and this was beginning to be felt in the air as a just faintly added perfume.

At last Wallcott's loud voice was heard in the distance, on the other side of the house, in the still air, and Mrs. Wynyate's shrill and angry answers.

"They'll be wanting—us," Lettice was going to say, but it sounded too intimate to her, and she changed it into "the horses," as she led the way hurriedly through the back-door into the house. Everhard went off in haste to the stable, and Lettice remained in the shadow of the porch, watching Wallcott, who was talking loudly and rudely, Mrs. Wynyate scolding angrily in return, while her uncle stood by in perfect silence, with the drawn look on his face which she could not bear to see.

No one paid the smallest attention to her. The old money-lender got upon his horse and rode away, declaiming on his wrongs in a loud voice, followed by his son. And Amyas came slowly and wearily back into the house with his mother.

"I wish it wore all over a'most!" said he, after a pause. "I can't do more: he must take it if he will! What, are you there, little one?" he went on, as Lettice came behind him; and taking hold of the hand which she laid upon his shoulder, "I care as much for you and mother's having to fight your way in this hard world as anything, the young and the old. I'm hardly fitter than you are, I do believe, to make both ends meet, and that's a bad thing to say of a man; it must be my own fault partly. I wonder how it ought to have been done?" he went on musing. "I'm so stupid at business. I'm sure I thought the interest had been paid for last year."

"Ho's a rogue is Wallcott!" cried his mother, angrily; "you may depend on't as you paid it."

"Nay, I'm not at all sure," said Amyas. "I'm so muddle-headed about figures. I know he had the money, but he says it went only for the compound interest of the year before. Lettie, get the figure-book, and see what that would come to?" he added, wearily.

"And then you've been so drained every way," said his mother, as the girl almost disappeared in the recesses of the deep old black oak press; "everybody casts their burdens upon you. I should like to know what Norton means by never paying yer sixpence for Lettie's expenses all these years!"

"Nay, that's no burden," answered Amyas, with one of his rare smiles, as Lettice reappeared with the book out of the closet, and came up to his side, with a pained, scared look in her face and the tears standing in her eyes. He drew her closer to him. "Lettie's been like the only bit of sunshine in the house all the time she's been in it; she knows that, and no father could have had a better child."

Lettie hid her tears by beginning on the awful page of figures.

"But they say, Norton's come home with a sight of money as he's made somewhere," persisted Mrs. Wynyate; "so it's a shame on him,

and he knowing you've always been so hampered, never so much as offer to pay."

"I don't want his money, anyway," answered Amyas, rising as if to put an end to the question; "nor him either," he muttered to himself.

"What came of that young fellow that rode up with Wallcott? Why, I left him here, Lettie? Where ever did he get to?" observed her grandmother, parenthetically.

Lettice, however, was studying the figure-book in the window, and could not be expected to hear.

"Wallcott's son? Why, he rode away with his father, surely!" answered her uncle, taking the "calculator" from her to work the sum himself; and Lettice ran upstairs, though she could not have told why; she felt as if something had happened, though she would have been utterly puzzled to say, even to herself, what it was.

CHAPTER VI.

PLEASANT WATERS.

WALLOTT and his son rode on in silence, the father grumbling to himself as he went along, till they came in sight of the beautiful river through the trees, rapid, clear, and transparent.

"I wonder to whom Mr. Wynyate lets his fishing," said Everhard, suddenly.

"Lets it!" cried his father, with a horse-laugh. "Ye may be sure he's such a soft that he lets it to nobody: he's just the sort of man to give it away. Not having a penny to bless himself with, he's sure to be generous: that's just as he did wi' what Amos Young left him, and he owed it to me as 'twere, and had no right to give it up o' that fashion. I say, fellow," he called out to a man in brown leather leggings and a dark green (surplice) smock-frock, who was setting up some hurdles, "who hires your master's fishing?"

"My brother gives it to whomsumdever he pleases at his pleasure," said Job, with some grandeur.

"And to whom now may it be his pleasure?" inquired Wallcott with a sneer. Job, however, vouchsafed no answer, but turned away to the lambs he was penning.

"I'll just make him give it to me, if that's how 'tis," said Wallcott, savagely, as they rode on. "To keep me out of my money, and then be generous with what isn't his'n!"

"Surely we ought to pay for it," observed his son, anxiously.

"Well, I don't care; we'll deduct it from the interest," answered his father. "I shall write to-night and tell him if I can't get money out of him I'll take it out in trout. You're allays worriting me about that fishing at Mapleford, which 'ud cost no end o' money: here, you take

this 'un, as you can have for naught as one may say. You may begin to-morrow if you like to."

Everhard jumped eagerly at the opportunity which his father so unwarily put within his reach; he had a holiday from the shipowner's office, and immediately set about his fishing. It was too far to ride over every day from home, and he secured a bedroom at a farmhouse so situated as to make it necessary for him to cross by the Woodhouse on his road to the river; and whenever he had any spare time, which was much oftener than was good for him, he went over there.

Amyas was more annoyed at the proceeding when he heard of it than at anything which had yet occurred. It looked to him like the beginning of taking the management of his property out of his hands: there was no help for it, however—he was entirely in the money-lender's power; but when Everhard attempted to make friends with him, it was more than even his patience could stand, and he avoided the young man most determinedly.

The fishing had now been going on for two whole days, but Everhard's passage to and fro had been in vain, and he began to think himself very ill-used, having seen nothing more interesting than the top of Mrs. Wynyate's formidable cap. She was very busy supplying the mowers; and Lettice, hard at work in the kitchen and the dairy, had heard and seen nothing of the fisherman, when on the third day,—

"'Tis long past dinner-time" (*i.e.* twelve o'clock), "and Job not home," said her grandmother. "I hates to have the fodd loiterin' and litterin' about all day like that. One can't eat a bit oneself, one gets so sick o' seeing it about, allays doing in the kitchen as Sally and me is now, and she's so slow at her choors.* That man from Dorset says he's used to seven meals at har'st time: his dewbit, breakfast, nuncheon, crunsheon, nammet, crammet, and supper: he'll eat us out of house and home if he goes on like that. What ever I'm to do wi' him I can't think. You take his nuncheon bag to yer uncle; he must be kep' by them nasty lambs."

Lettice did as she was bid. It was not often that she now went beyond the garden, and all the birds seemed to make her welcome as she came out among them. She passed through the hay-field, where the great waggons were loading, the horses standing sleepily by, eating the scented grass. The pleasant music of the mowers whetting their scythes seemed to fill the air (ill-exchanged for the harsh grating sound of the hay-cutting machine); while the part of the meadow still uncut, with daisies pied, lay before her, "you scarce could see the grass for flowers." Over all hung the summer haze, "the pride o' the marnen," as it is called on that country-side. Job, however, was not to be seen, and the obnoxious "Dorset man" directed her forwards. "He's gone t'other side to Langley Bottom but now."

She turned down through a little coppice wood which shelved to the

* "Char"-woman. American, "chores."

river, where the rich luxuriance of vegetation in those southern districts was in all its glory : the brilliant green of the tall fern, the bright midsummer shoots, the wild tangled undergrowth under the taller trees, as if nature enjoyed the very fact of existence and loved to be alive : it is a perfect paradise of trees and flowers, though Amyas might perhaps have complained that his crops did not relish the light soil so well. She went along the path, singing in a low voice, as she unconsciously always did at her work, whatever it was, rather to her grandmother's annoyance : when she came upon a man industriously threshing the water, and stopped short, for she recognized Everhard, who began to wind up his line as he walked towards her.

"I suppose your herons are so fond of fishing that they don't leave much for other people," said he. "Does your uncle get much when he's at home ? I've caught next to nothing."

"Sometimes," replied she, shyly, annoyed with herself for not finding anything better to say.

"I wonder what flies he used," mused Everhard, looking over his own collection.

"He used to shoot the trout, by times."

"Shoot them ! But that wasn't fair."

"Granny was wishful of fish some days for dinner, and he hadn't no time for his rod allays."

There was an awkward pause as they walked on silently, side by side, by the river's brink, while they were both wondering where all the words in the English language seemed to have gone.

"There was a big old trout lived at that turn further on under the alder, I mind he used to say," said she, feeling as if she were inhospitable, and making an effort.

"If you would but tell me the haunts where the fish live ? It is such a thing to get some one who knows the river," said he eagerly, as if his whole soul were in his rod.

"But I don't know them now," answered she. "Uncle Ted comes so seldom to us." He kept by her as she moved along the little copse path, but said not a word, feeling as if he had expended all his ammunition.

"There," said she, "that's one place where the fish used to love to bide." And she pointed to where a large trout was holding his own in the strong current, his head against the stream, balancing himself with an almost imperceptible motion of his orange fins. She stood for a moment leaning over the river. Nothing could be more exquisite than the rapid bright clear stream, which, coming down from the chalk hills beyond, rushed past swift as an arrow, though the plain looked perfectly flat—so brilliant, so dark, so light, the water ever changing, and yet the stream ever the same, the "busy river" flowing on for ever, in such haste and never arriving, the most changeless thing in its ceaseless motion. The trees, and even the hills, seem touched with signs of decay and age, but the bright water flows on as fresh as the day when it first came out of the

fountains of the earth : the little wavelets rose cool in the hot sunshine, quiet, yet never resting : there was a strange fascination in watching it. The may-flies were fluttering over it, a kingfisher darted restlessly across, giant dragon-flies flashed fiercely to and fro among the tall willow-herb and meadow-sweet, and blue forget-me-nots swayed in the stream. The girl steeled herself by the stump of an old willow, and stood gazing into the cool translucent depth.

"How beautiful it is ! one feels almost as if it would be so nice to throw oneself in," said she, with a dreamy smile.

Everhard suddenly drew her from the brink, and set her back a couple of yards or more as if she had been a child. She turned round with an expression which she intended to be very angry and annoyed.

"How like a fawn," said the young man to himself (his comparisons ran all among the birds and beasts), as he looked at the startled shy look of her large soft brown eyes and delicate nostrils and mouth. "I beg your pardon," he went on aloud ; "but you looked exactly as if the water-nixies were trying to lure you in."

"What are the nixies ?" answered she, half smiling.

"Water-sprites with bad intentions," replied he, laughing.

"But," said Lettice—for here was an opportunity of further settling her mind on that difficult point in theology which still tormented her, with one whom she considered very wise—"you don't believe in our meeting evil spirits here, do you ? I don't mean water-nixies," she added, with a smile : "that's nonsense, I know. But," she added, in a low voice, "the preacher in chapel on Sunday said, 'Demons, devils, hundreds of them, with the Prince of Darkness at their head, were always about us.' " And she looked anxiously at him.

He could hardly help smiling at the extreme incongruousness of the question and the questioner : the pure, innocent little face before him did not seem to have much to do with evil spirits.

"Uncle Amyas doesn't think we can see them," she said, uneasily at his hesitation. Supposing, after all, that this learned pundit should differ from her uncle.

He looked up and saw her expression.

"No, certainly, I don't believe it a bit," said he, very positively, to her great and evident relief. Strictly speaking, his opinion was not perhaps of great value, as the question had never occurred to him before ; but it is said that a judgment has the greatest weight when no reasons whatever are given for it : and as his oracular decision seemed quite satisfactory to Lettice, he prudently made a quick descent on things which he knew a little more about.

"Listen ! That's the sedge-warbler. It's a nice pretty note, isn't it ? And how those missel-thrushes do sing. I never heard such a place as this is for birds."

"You know them all by their voices to set their names to. I'm always strivin' to hearken what they says one to another," answered

Lettice ; " and never gets to know their faces like. What's that a-moving in your pocket ? You haven't a-got the birds in there ? "

" It's only a tame snake," said Everhard, pulling one out of his pocket. " Wouldn't you like to have it ? It's very quiet and harmless, and it's marked so pretty." What can a man do more than offer the most precious of his possessions—the best he has ?

" I don't think granny would quite like it in the house," replied Lettice, shrinking a little back as she tried to feel grateful and to admire the uncanny pet sufficiently. They had reached the gate which led out of the wood into the farther field.

" Are you going ? " said he, regretfully.

" I'm wanted at home," answered she, a little reluctantly ; " and there's uncle Job must have his bag. It's he will tell you about the grayling."

" I'm afraid Mr. Wynyate is very vexed at my father taking the fishing : he won't even speak to me when I meet him up and down ; so I didn't dare to send him any fish yesterday."

" Perhaps it's because as your father talked of——" and she stopped.

" I don't wonder," he answered, a little sadly ; " but I'm in hopes as he'll think better, and give time about the mortgage. I'll do my best. Couldn't ye say to your uncle some time, that we'd no thought to annoy him, and that I wouldn't for all in the world do any harm to anything of his."

" He'll come right : uncle Amyas is allays so kind," said she, moving off to Job—who was standing looking at them in a "brown stud," as he leant on a gate which led into a field so gorgeous with poppies and corn-flowers that the wheat seemed quite a secondary part of the concern.

" Those flowers look just like a garden," said Everhard, admiringly.

" Well, what on earth can folk think them pretty for, I wonder ? " replied Job. " The tilth ain't nothing as it should be to-year ; * the ground haven't a had richment enow, though there's no saying where Amyas were to get manure for't, I'm sure." Then, as he watched Lettice moving homewards, and Everhard's eyes following her, he went on to himself,— " Eh, he's sweet upon Lettie is the young Wallcott, and that's a good thing. Maybe 'twill make the old 'un easier about the money. Amyas seems allays to think as I be a fool, but I've a very long head when I chooses," concluded Job, with a nod worthy of Lord Burleigh, as he prepared to answer Everhard's questions about the fishing.

Therefore after this, whenever the young man came to the farmyard and loitered about till Lettice appeared, and made excuses to discuss farming matters with Job, and broke his landing-net, and found a dozen transparent reasons for strolling up to the Woodhouse, that patient man was quite "agreeable," and Lettice embarked unconsciously on those difficult waters with only this very unversed pilot to guide her. A day or two after, the

* "To-year"—As in "to-day" or "to-morrow."

young man entered the house with a remarkably fine trout in his hand. "The finest I've caught yet, and I thought you ought to have it, out of your own river, Mrs. Wynyate," said he. "Might I ask for some silk-thread to mend my rod?" And, her grandmother standing sternly by, Lettice produced the skein, and with rather trembling hands wound it silently round the broken bits which he held together, and there was a charm in the very constraint.

Another time it was, "I've been over to Seaford on business for my father, and seen your son Ned, Mrs. Wynyate: he sends ye word they're so busy that he can't be spared to come home: there's been so much smuggling lately down the coast, that they're at it day and night with the cutter, and he can't get away, he says, even for a day."

"Well," replied she, "it's all in the day's work as 'twere; 'tis his business. and Amyas is dead agin they 'fair-traders'—he thinks no end o' harm on 'um. But run goods is a great convenieney, there's no donying o' that: what wi' th' duties and such like, tea's up at no end of a price, and brandy too, and the cider's so cold upon the stomach as I must keep some in the house now. And what the King and the Queen is about I can't think, as they're so hard on poor folk now about the taxes and things! What ever does they do wi' all that money we pays, I wonder?"

Instead of attending to which instructive remarks, Everhard had turned to where Lettice stood preparing a heap of golden apples for an immense "pasty" which Mrs. Wynyate was constructing, with a crust half-an-inch thick: a tremendous "piece of resistance." There was no weak indulgence of the appetite in her culinary régime, and even a tart in her hands took a serious and mortificatory aspect.

"What beautiful fruit," said he, beginning to eat the "pigs" into which she was cutting it, and which she put before him without looking up. "'Twill taste rare and good when it's baked," he added in a very suggestive tone.

Lettice looked up at her grandmother with the bright colour rising in her cheeks; but Mrs. Wynyate was not given to hospitality: she hated a stranger, and was even unsoftened by the praises of her pie. It is bad manners, however, in a farm-house, not to offer "refreshment," at whatever hour in the day; and she suddenly turned on Lettice as she bethought herself of a compromise.

"Here's my keys, child: do you fetch that bottle of hard batch." (wine made from the outdoor grapes); "'tis in the corner cupboard."

Lettice rather unwillingly obeyed, for the mixture was so like verjuice that even her long-suffering uncle had declared after the first taste that "he thought he had had enough." As she poured it out accordingly for Everhard, she looked up in his face with a half smile of annoyance—a comic look of deprecation at being made to offer it to him.

But Everhard was equal to the emergency. He drank off the horrid stuff with the air of a hero who will dare this and even more for his lady's sake! There was a conscious virtue about him incidental to the

state of "veal," as some one has called that intermediate phase of a man's life ; but even this sacrifice was of no avail, and he was obliged to take his leave.

All through that summer weather, however, he went and came. He discovered that the Woodhouse was on the nearest road to every place ; and as it did not add above half the distance to his journeys, no one had any reason to complain but his horse. He and Lettice met continually, although Amyas still persistently avoided him. The young man made several attempts to be friendly, but after a while he thought it wisest to wait a better time, and gave up the trial.

Sometimes it was a request, sometimes an offering, which brought him up to the house ; and the girl's eyes grew bright, and the unconscious colour rose to her cheeks, and a wistful look came into her face when they met, and he thought it was the most eloquent speech which he had ever come across.

The fish appeared constantly at dinner : for Mrs. Wynyate received the tribute graciously, but Amyas made no observation upon them. Lettice watched anxiously for an opportunity, hoping to put in a word in the fisher's favour. Her uncle, however, ignored the subject so entirely, that she had not the courage to begin on it.

"Walcott's son takes uncommon care not to do no hurt anywhere : he's a very 'tentful man, and he's a sort of right like to be here, yo know, one may say," said Job one day—which did not make the matter better in his brother's eyes. Amyas did not answer : he knew better than the others how near the precipice of ruin they stood with Everhard's father, and wished to have no dealings with the son.

CHAPTER VII.

A SUMMER'S NIGHT.

It was above a fortnight since Everhard had been heard of ; he had left no sign as to when he might be expected again, and he hung by so loose a thread that no one had the smallest ground by which to calculate his movements.

"I suppose that young fella's pretty nigh tired o' his fishing," said Job one evening. "I haven't a seen him about this ever so long."

Lettice stepped out at the door with a sigh : she had finished her day's work and was very weary : her grandmother had been more than usually trying, and as she made a few steps out upon the grass in the orchard she felt very lonely. "I wish I'd somebody young just for to speak to, granny's so old" (she did not like to say, even to herself, "so cross") ; "and uncle Amyas is grown so sad like," she said to herself, generalising her particular feeling into the desire for sympathy. Perhaps Everhard was gone "for good," as she justly said to herself. There was clearly no reason why he should come back—he might have had enough of

fishing ; and two great tears, to her own surprise, began to creep down her little cheeks. And then she asked herself what it meant, with a sudden qualm at the dismal change which had come upon her unawares. Love-making was an occupation so entirely unknown at the Woodhouse that it did not enter into Lettie's experience, and she was not versed in all the methods and circumstances of "falling" into it by which young novel-readers of the present day know to an iota what will happen, and what ought, must, and should be said under every possible conjuncture. This now and strange feeling was one which nobody at the farm (and, therefore, in the world) had ever to her knowledge undergone, and she blushed and grew pale again : for as most of the things she said and did were wrong according to her grandmother's creed, probably this nameless pang was so too.

The evening grew darker : the deep red crimson and gold of the sunset was fading into the night, with a sort of luminous twilight which was not night. The sounds gradually died away : an occasional cackle from the poultry as they tucked their heads under their wings, the lowing of a cow in a distant pasture, or the bleating of a complaining sheep, sank each after each into the silence as she stood just beyond the old porch. It was too bright for any stars to be seen but one great planet, probably Venus (who was evidently in the ascendant), which hung like a little moon above the trees.

A strange feeling of loneliness came over her which she had never had before, as if she had no friends : she felt a sort of hunger at her heart as she strayed timidly with a kind of shiver into the warm still night with a low sigh, and wished humbly that she had a sister or a brother, or "something young." "*Einsam bin ich, nicht allein,*" is the burden of the lovely melody which Weber makes poor Preciosa sing ; and to be alone was a great luxury, which poor Lettice longed for often and very seldom obtained.

Mrs. Wynyate had been complaining all day. "I'm afraid I must be very bad," said the girl to herself, in that painful perplexity as to who was in the wrong, which is real suffering. In those days it was the rankest rebellion to suppose your elders and parents could be otherwise than infallible, and the first dawn of such a heresy was a painful wrench to a very conscientious mind. Such struggles are generally saved at the present time, as in any difference of opinion with their elders the young do not feel the smallest doubt as to who must be in the wrong.

And she covered her face with her little hands, and some sad tears fell through them ; the feeling that she never satisfied her grandmother hung heavily on her heart. No one knows, unless they have felt it, how depressing it is for a young spirit to live under the weight of constant dissatisfaction : it is like the absence of sun to a flower ; ungrudging praise and tenderness are as necessary to the human plant. Her conscience had been unnaturally stimulated, out of which either a reckless feeling or a morbid sensitiveness arises.

"I must be quite bad," said Lettice. "I never do nothing right. I wish I'd somebody to help tell me what's good."

It was the stillest evening. Presently the nightingales began their song: full-throated, clear, and rich the melody welled forth: it seems impossible that such a body of sound could come out of that little grey bird; the thick-warbled notes literally thrilled in the air, and then from the distant wood came the answer, so clear, so brilliant, one prolonged note after the other, and the rapid joyous shake at the end. Who could ever have called the nightingale sad?

"Everybody's got somebody to speak to but me," sobbed Lettice to herself, looking up however, and listening, for the instinct of music was strong in her nature, and the song made her feel less lonely.

Just beyond the corner of the house was a bank on which she saw the little green lamp hung out by a glowworm for her winged spouse: she went a few steps out under the trees, and as she stooped to pick it up, she heard the click of the little wicket-gate, as Teazer, Everhard's Scotch terrier, wisest and most solemn of dogs, laid his paw on the latch—as was his wont—opened it for himself, and came gravely up to salute her. Presently she heard her uncle's voice,—

"What, so you've come back, young 'un!" Job always considered his dignity involved in treating Everhard rather majestically. "I thowt you'd pretty nigh done with us."

"I've been at Seaford this fortnight," replied he. "There was business there in the ship-office, and I was wanted. I saw Ned just before I came away, and I've brought a parcel from him for your niece."

"Lettie was in the archat but now, under the Welsh nuts" (walnuts), said the sapient Job. "Here, child," he called out, "you come here in no time; 'tain't often as a handsel comes to the Woodhouse, for whom-soever it may be."

And Lettice came shyly up to the little gate, on the other side of which stood Everhard and her uncle.

He drew the small packet out of some inner pocket and held it out to her; when she took it, however, he did not leave his hold, but kept both her hand and it.

Lettice scarcely knew what to do—"because it will look as if I were in such a hurry if I pull it," reasoned she to herself; "and if I leave go 'twill seem as I were vexed."

"Mark Giles were just a-saying to me as he didn't know what to do wi' the nets and rods, we were such a mortal long time without hearin' aught on ye," observed Job.

"Have you thought it a long while, Lettice?" said Everhard, in a low voice, leaning over the gate towards her, and without answering Job.

Lettice was silent, and hoped that it was too dark to see her tall-tale blushes.

"What are ye doing out there, Lettice, wasting o' yer time o' this fashion, and that spikenard all littering about in the window-seat, and

yer uncle's plate and glass not set by yet? Come in directly, child, I want to shut np," cried her grandmother, sharply, at the open door.

Now Lettice had been hard at work the whole day, and the bits of lavender which she had laid out to dry to put with her uncle's shirts did nobody any harm: so that this reflection on her housewifeliness, before the only stranger she had ever known, seemed to her to be cruel. She wrung away her hand hastily, and went into the house, with the tears in her eyes.

"What call has mother crying out like that?" soliloquized Job. "Why, the little lass 'ud run herself off of both her feet to pleasure a body, that's what she would. She's a good little maid, as does her dooty by all folk."

But Lettice did not hear her defender.

"What's that you've got there in your hand?" said her grandmother; "and who was you talking to out there by the wicket?"

Lettice half unconsciously unfolded her parcel as an answer and a protection against overmuch questioning.

"Uncle Ned sent it as a present by Mr. Everhard, from Senford," she said, slowly.

"And so that young fella's come back again, whipping of the water day after day; and a pretty way of spendin' his time for an immortal soul, that is! And what call has Ned for to send you blue ribins for yer hat, I'd like to know? Such waste! and you that goes nowhere," went on Mrs. Wynyate, looking with much disgust at the obnoxious bit of silk as she locked the door. "And I don't like that new afternoon frock of yourn: there's too much white in it; I telled ye so when you bought it," added she, in an annoyed tone, looking at Lettice with a disapproving snort.

It was a most innocent pale blue and white cotton; but somehow she could not help everything which she put on partaking of the dainty look of her own little person; and she certainly looked a great deal too pretty for her grandmother's theories.

"Nay, mother," said Amyas, who came up, "I like her to be so trim and neat; 'tain't much that's pretty as we've got about the house to look at, as we can afford to do without Lettie's frock." And he stroked her head fondly as they all went upstairs to bed.

When Lettice had put out her light she looked through the open lattice once more into the night, and saw a dark shadow still moving under the old trees, and crept away half frightened in her coy, shy way, instead of leaning out of the window; and then lay awake for hours thinking what "it" meant and "he" meant, and the "meaning" of the world in general.

CHAPTER VIII.

A "FROST IN JUNE."

THE next morning it seemed to Lettice as if the world were all in a sort of maze, and although she took great pains to tell her body to go about its business faithfully, her soul was not, as it ought to have been, among her preserving-pots, but wandering about somewhere outside by the river, or wherever Everhard might be at that moment.

"I can't think what ails ye, child, to-day," said Mrs. Wynyate, in an aggrieved tone. "Are ye grown dunch all of a sudden? Why, I telled ye three times as the black currant warn't to go in them jars."

Lettice blushed guiltily: she knew only too well that she had been listening intently for another voice, and could not hear her grandmother's. It was quite late in the morning before she had done her work: when suddenly seeing a fight going on between Teazer and her own particular white kitten, she ran out to the rescue on the green before the house. Teazer was a serious dog, a high-minded dog, but he was not above the delight of tormenting a kitten; he was getting rather the worst of the battle, however, when she took up the indignant little spitfire, although he danced barking round her, as if he was being defrauded of his prey.

"Lettice," said Teazer's master, in a low voice, from behind the cedar (he was certainly as much to blame as his dog in the attack on her pet), "won't you come into the orchard?"

Now it happened that Wallcott, passing near the Woodhouse, took it into his head that day to come and look after his son's very pertinacious fishing: he had been a good deal pleased at Everhard's going so much to the place, as it seemed in his eyes like a proof of his future ownership, and it was not that he suspected mischief of any kind: he had never seen Lettice with the eyes of his mind, whatever he might have done with those of his body; he had a sort of notion that there was a "woman child" at the Wynyates', but that was all. He liked, however, spying into by-places where he was not expected, and finding out secret ways: they were often useful to him in his business. He put up his horse at a little wayside inn not far off and walked up, and as he came quietly in near the gate into the orchard he stumbled on another listener, the blind man, who almost ran against him in suddenly turning the corner of some farm-buildings.

"They thinks as I can't see 'um," said the old man in his exultation, not regarding to whom he might be speaking; "but I heerd 'um pass all one as if I did, he and she too, into the archat."

"Who, you old fool?" said Wallcott, in an angry tone of command. He smelt mischief; here was a secret which he had not bargained for.

"Our young missis," answered the old man, reluctantly, and with a sudden chill, as he felt that he had let out what ought not to have been told to a mere stranger.

"And who was with her?" repeated the other, angrily.

The old man was silent.

"I will know," said Wallcott, taking hold of his staff and shaking it.

"The young 'un as is down fishing," replied the trembling old man, in great distress at what he had done.

Wallcott strode on with an oath towards the orchard; but he changed his mind, and turned to the house.

"So that's your game, Wynyat?" he cried, in his loud insolent voice, to Amyas whom he found at the door. "Luring my son on in this way, and thinking that'll pay your debts, I'll be bound. You're quite out there, and she too, I can tell ye. It's a burning shame!"

Amyas looked so completely at sea that it would have convinced any one less prejudiced how entirely innocent he was.

"Now don't you pretend not to understand. Where's yer niece at this minnit?"

"I'm sure I can't tell," said Amyas, striving to be calm.

"She and Everhard are making love in the orchard, confound 'um! Come and see for yourself."

"Then it ain't more to my pleasure nor yours that she's aught to do with him," said Amyas, with an expression almost of disgust as they both hurried across the green shaven sward.

And Everhard had just said to Lettice, as with the white kitton in her arms they sauntered down under the bright flickering lights and shadows in the shadiest part of the grove, near the deep quiet pools, "Lettie, I've been away to try and see plain into my own feeling, and whether I could manage to live without you, my darling" with the unconscious selfishness whereby a man often considers that his share in the concern is the only really important part of the matter); "but," he went on, "you've got my heart too tight in your little hand for me to disentangle. Give me your own instead, my little one."

And Lettice blushing from head to foot, as it seemed to her, turned away from him, for the flowers and the birds and the wind all seemed to her to be telling her secret, and to be whispering, "You know you've got it already;" and as he drew her towards him she raised her eyes, with the shy fawn look in them, and he seemed to read it there too. "At least it's gone away from me," she put in.

And the two delinquents stood, her hand in his and the smile gathering on her face, too much engrossed with each other to see the storm approaching—when, instead of the answer which each expected, two angry voices at the same moment began:—

"Lettice, come here to me directly. How can you have anything to do with that fellow?"

And Wallcott's furious, "I'll tell yer what, sir; I'll disown yer for my son unless ye come off instantly. A lot of scheming ruined chests, trying to make a market out on ye."

In the first surprise they had drawn a little apart, but Everhard took hold once more of her hand as he answered, "If there's been any scheming, it's been mine to win her. I'll give her up for no hard words."

"You're a blind fool not to see what they're after," cried his father, angrily; while Amyas, seizing Lettice's other hand, and leading her off, was saying,—

"I won't have ye stay to hear such things said by any man. Come away with me, Lottie."

The bewildered girl looked from one to the other in utter dismay.

"I'll be true to you, be true to me," said Everhard, in a low voice, as his father almost drove him before him in the other direction. He had been a spoilt child all his life: in his weakly days his mother would not allow him to be crossed, and as he grew up his father's pursuits and tastes were so opposed to his that they hardly ever came into collision. He had often seen Wallcott in a passion, but never before with him, his only child, the object of his pride and ambition. He had fancied that in anything on which he really set his heart his father would quickly yield, and was so utterly confounded and astonished at this vehemence of indignation, that he suffered himself to be led off in a way which confirmed Amyas's dislike and his feeling that the young man was only trifling with Lettice for the amusement of his idle time.

"Uncle," said the poor girl, sobbing violently, "what does it mean? Why do ye send him away like that?"

"How could ye let that fellow make up to you, child?" cried Amyas, more sternly than she thought possible for him.

"I thought no harm," said the girl, gently; "he's so good and true."

"He's come of a bad father, who's ruining me inch by inch: a cheating, insolent knave. He's got a rope round my neck, and he tells me to my face I'm saving myself by dragging in his son to marry ye. I'd rather see ye in yer coffin, Lettie, before ye wedded with such as he."

"But he said he'd soon see and set all right with his father about the mortgage, as you shouldn't be troubled," said Lettice, pitifully.

"I want none of his charity; let him mind his own business and keep himself to hisself. Set all right indeed! I should like to see Wallcott's face when he offered to meddle wi' such matters! Don't ye see, Lettie, he's just playing wi' ye; how he went off when his father drove him like a sheep. Why didn't he speak up more to his face, if he really cared for ye?"

"What were all that row about?" said Job, coming up from the other side as they returned to the house. "I heard ye hollering and squealing all over the farm."

"It were that fellow Wallcott's son as has been making up to Lettie," answered Amyas, much excited. "Of all the men that's in the world the very last as should have anything to do with her."

"Well, and what's the harm o' him?" answered Job, philosophically.

"And then Wallcott flings it in my teeth that I'm a-drawing and wiling in his son to marry her to set matters straight as 'twere about the money!"

"Well, and what did that sinnify? Where could he find a better? Ain't she as good a lass as any man need have? and the young 'un can throw a line as neat as any one I e'er come across; he were as sharp as a needle t'other day arter the rabbits, and he'd make her a good husband!"

Amyas almost smiled. "Well, we needn't argufy it; Wallcott'll no more let it be than he'd fly,—nor I neither."

"But why not, Amyas?" persisted Job. "The young 'un always said as how he'd circumvent his father and keep him quiet along o' the mortgage, and that 'ud be a terrible fine thing for you."

"And that's just what I don't choose,—to set Lettie's love barter like for the money on the farm. But what's the use o' talking? you can't odds it with me nor with Wallcott neither."

Lettice looked from one to the other in a mazo of surprise and misery.

"You're a silly fella, Job," interposed Mrs. Wynyate, who had come up and was looking out of the low window as they stood just outside the house, but had listened hitherto in silence. "Don't ye see Wallcott's one who'd sooner leave his money to the pigs if his son married to disoblige him? You're quite out in yer reckoning. Excuse the mortgage! he'd sooner by far see him a beggarman for crossing him."

Lettice wandered upstairs and sat down in her little room, tearless and hopeless; the "frost in June," as it were, had fallen upon her garden in full bloom.

"Ye should have seen to the girl, mother," said Amyas, who hardly ever uttered a syllable of blame to her. "How ever could you let her make free with that fellow?"

"I'm sure I'd no more thought of her o' that fashion nor the crows, and she such a child!" replied her grandmother, angrily.

"How old is she?" said Amyas.

"Eighteen," answered Mrs. Wynyate, after some consideration.

"Sure her mother weren't such a very deal older, were she, when she took on wi' Norton Lisle?"

"Scarce nineteen," sighed the old woman, with a host of melancholy recollections thronging over her. "It's queer how soon these young 'uns grows up, too; 'tis like the beanstalks, up ever so high when one's back's turned and one isn't looking. 'Twere but yesterday, seems, as Lettice came to us ever such a little 'un, after that time her mother died!"

The old blind man had been anxiously wandering round the farm to see what had come of the match he had so unconsciously helped in firing. In the afternoon he met Lettice going sadly about her work.

"Well, little 'un, how's it all going?" said he. "It's a proper job, that's what it is! I knows all about yon young chap, more nor he thinks of, and o' all the folk as he comes on. My son Thomas were wi' the old 'un for to mind the horses and the garden, and 'twere one of the hardest placent he've ever a had."

"Tell me, Dannel," answered Lettice, sadly.

"Ye see Wallcott were a widowman wi' a family, and this as is his second wife had a been married and had a child, and then there come this 'un. So there were his'n, and her'n, and their'n, ye see. And they all died just one after another, like flies, but Everhard; and a queer name it were to give a cristened child; but 'twere Wallcott's mother's maiden name, I've a heerd tell. And they both sets no end of store on this, as is the last chick they've got, and no end o' money for him; and that's where 'tis: and they thinks naught's too good for him, not if it were a princess born and bred. Though for that matter, Joe's wife seed the King a-posting down to Weymouth wi' the Queen likewise, years back, and she allays said as how she were an ugly old thing, wi' not a mossel o' crown upo' her head, and her bonnet not much to speak on."

"I know I'm not good enough for him," said poor Lettice, humbly.

The Approaching Transit of Mercury.

WHEN the sun rises on November 5 next, there will appear to those who examine his disc with a telescope (one of very moderate power will suffice) a small round black spot upon his surface. If this spot be carefully watched from time to time during the next two hours it will be seen slowly to pass towards the edge of the sun's disc and so to disappear. This phenomenon will be caused by the interposition of the small planet Mercury between the earth and the sun; and the apparent passage of the planet across the solar disc is termed a transit of Mercury.

Transits of the inferior planets across the solar disc are not common phenomena. Those of Mercury always occur either in May or in November. The last took place on November 11, 1861; and after the transit of the present year, there will be none till May 6, 1878. The phenomena which are presented during transit have been found sufficiently interesting to attract considerable attention among astronomers, and they seem calculated to throw light on many questions connected with the physics of the celestial regions. We propose to give a brief sketch of what has been done in this connection. But we shall first make a few preliminary remarks respecting the small and swiftly-moving planet which has been named after the crafty god of ancient mythology.

It affords a high idea of the watchfulness of the ancient astronomers that they should have detected the existence of the planet Mercury. It is so close to the sun as never to be seen save in the full glare of morning or evening twilight. Laplace says—"A long series of observations was doubtless necessary to recognize the identity of the two bodies which were seen alternately in the morning and evening to recede from and approach the sun; but, at length, as one never presented itself until the other had disappeared, it was concluded that it was the same planet which oscillated on each side of the sun." Yet, as the planet Venus was known by the two names *Hesperus* and *Phosphorus*, so Mercury was for a long time recognized by the Greeks under the two names of *Apollo* the God of Day, and *Mercury* the God of Thieves, "who profit by the evening," says Arago in explanation, "to commit their misdeeds." Yet is it fully as likely that the name Mercury was assigned to the planet on account of the rapidity of its movements and the difficulty of detecting it. In our latitudes the planet is very seldom visible to the naked eye. It is related that Copernicus, who died at the age of seventy, complained towards the end of his life that though he had often tried he had never been able to detect the planet, "in consequence, probably," says Gassendi, "of the thick vapours which ascend above the horizon on the banks of the Vistula

where the illustrious astronomer resided." The author of this paper has twice seen the planet with the naked eye in the course of this year, and once in 1868. However, Mercury fully deserves the comment of an old writer (named Goad) in 1686, who described the planet as "a squinting laquey of the sun, seldom showing his head in these parts, as if he were in debt."

Yet we learn from Lepsius's *Chronologie der Ägypter* that the Egyptians had watched the planet (which they considered sacred to the God Horus) from the earliest times. The Indians associated Mercury with Buddha; and the tribe of the Asedites, in Western Arabia, directed their worship exclusively to this planet. The astronomer Ptolemy, in the ninth book of the *Almagest*, records as many as fourteen accurate observations of Mercury, extending back 261 years before our era, and belonging in part to the systematic labours of the ancient Chaldean astronomers. The earliest of these observations is dated in the year of Nabonassar 494, or sixty years after the death of Alexander the Great, on the morning of the 19th day of the Egyptian month *Thoth*. In the observation, the planet's place was carefully assigned with reference to two fixed stars, neither of which, we feel certain, has ever been visible in our latitudes in such full twilight as always surrounds the planet Mercury.

There is one recorded observation of Mercury which is yet more remarkable. On June 9, in the 118th year of the Christian era, Chinese astronomers observed the planet near to a small cluster of stars called the Beehive. From the terms in which the observation is recorded it would seem that the cluster of stars was actually visible at the same time as the planet. Yet, in our latitudes, the cluster is never seen save when the sky is nearly at its darkest. There can be no doubt, however, as to the correctness of the Chinese astronomers in this respect, since the eminent French astronomer Leverrier has calculated the place of the planet at the recorded time, and finds that it must have been quite close to the Beehive.

As early as the ninth century it was asserted that Mercury had been seen projected upon the sun's disc. The author of the *Life of Charlemagne* asserts that the planet was visible as a black spot upon the sun for eight consecutive days. The astronomer Kepler, who was perfectly well aware that Mercury moves too rapidly to remain even for eight hours on the sun's disc, endeavoured to show that the expression originally used in the manuscript had not been *octo dies*, but *octoties*, a barbaric form of *octies*, for "eight times." It is related also that a Spanish Moor, named Averroës, saw the planet on the sun in the year 1161, at a time when the planet really was very nearly on the line joining the centres of the earth and sun. Kepler himself supposed he had seen the planet on the sun. The invention of the telescope soon afterwards proved that the supposed transits must have really been due to the presence of unusually large spots upon the sun's surface. It is now known that the planet is not large enough to be seen by the naked eye when transiting the sun's disc.

Kepler was the first to examine the subject of transits. He asserted that transits of Venus were phenomena of much less frequent occurrence than those of Mercury. When he had completed his Rudolphine tables of the planetary motions, he was able to arrive at tolerably accurate results as to the epochs of the transits of Mercury and Venus over the solar disc. In fact, he announced two years later, that in the year 1691, both Mercury and Venus would pass over the sun's face—Mercury on November 7, and Venus on December 6.

The astronomer Gassendi made preparations for the observation of the transit at Paris. The manner in which he observed the phenomenon was somewhat remarkable. Through a small aperture in a shutter the solar light was admitted into a darkened room, and an image of the sun, some nine or ten inches in diameter, was formed upon a white screen. A carefully divided circle was traced upon this screen, and the whole was so arranged that the image of the sun could be made to coincide exactly with the circle. As Gassendi was anxious to ascertain the exact moment of the ingress of the planet upon the sun's disc, or—supposing he should fail in that respect—at least to determine the moment of egress, and as he had no trustworthy clock, he determined that the altitude of the sun should be carefully estimated several times during the progress of the transit, and particularly at the moment of egress. It was necessary, therefore, that he should have an assistant, and, further, that his assistant should work in another room, for from the room in which Gassendi was working the sun's light, as we have said, had been carefully excluded, save at the minute aperture in the window-shutter. Accordingly, Gassendi placed his assistant in a room above him, with a large quadrant for taking altitudes, instructing him to observe the height of the sun as soon as he heard Gassendi stamp upon the floor of the room beneath. A clumsy arrangement, truly, when compared with the subtle devices of modern astronomers—with the aid which they derive from powerful telescopes, all but perfect clocks, and, where need arises for communicating with one another from distant stations, the instantaneous indications of telegraphy—yet we cannot but admire the spirit in which Gassendi worked, the readiness with which, for want of more perfect instruments, he set himself to invent arrangements which suited his requirements, and the skill with which he availed himself of those imperfect adaptations.

And if we admire these qualities in Gassendi, still more must we admire the patience with which he waited for the commencement of the phenomenon. Modern astronomy is able to announce, within three or four seconds, the instant at which a transit will commence at any given spot upon the earth's surface. But Kepler's prediction respecting Mercury's motions did not lay claim to any accuracy of this sort. So uncertain did the epoch of the occurrence appear to be, that Gassendi began to watch for the transit *two days* before the date assigned by Kepler for its occurrence.

The 5th of November proved unfavourable for observation, the day

being rainy. The next day was also unsuitable, clouds having overspread the sky during nearly the whole day. The morning of the 7th, the day appointed by Kepler for the transit, was also cloudy. Thus Gassendi began his watch on that day with the uncomfortable feeling that during some part of the two preceding days the planet might already have passed over the sun's disc; perhaps that the transit had been completed but a few minutes before the clouds broke up on the morning of the 7th.

A little before eight the sun shone for a few minutes through the openings between the clouds, but there still remained enough mist to prevent Gassendi from being able to determine whether any spot existed upon the image of the sun in his observing-room. Nearly an hour passed before the sun was sufficiently clear of clouds to enable Gassendi to make any satisfactory observations. Towards nine, however, the sun became distinctly visible, and turning to the image on the screen, the astronomer perceived upon it a small black spot. He could not believe, however, that this was Mercury, as the received estimate of the planet's dimensions had led him to look for a spot nearly twice as large. As he was familiar with the nature of solar spots, and the rapid manner in which they form, he concluded that one had made its appearance on the sun's surface since the preceding day. At nine o'clock he had another opportunity of observing the spot, and he carefully estimated its position, intending to make use of it as a point of reference for determining the path of the planet in transit, supposing he should be fortunate enough to witness that phenomenon. Soon after, he had another view of the spot, and was surprised to find that it had moved away considerably from its former position. He felt assured that no ordinary solar spot could have moved so rapidly; but still he could not persuade himself that he was looking at Mercury in transit, having so fully satisfied his mind respecting the dimensions which the planet should exhibit. Besides, the hour had not yet arrived at which Kepler had predicted that the transit would begin.

Gassendi was still in doubt, and endeavouring to recall the circumstances of his former measurement, in order to convince himself that he had made no mistake, when the sun again made his appearance through the clouds, and it was apparent that the spot had moved yet farther from its original place. No room now remained for doubt. It was clear that the phenomenon which had been so long and so anxiously awaited by the astronomer was already in progress. He immediately stamped upon the floor to attract the notice of his assistant. But this person, whose name has not reached us, was possessed of less patience than Gassendi. He probably felt much less interest in the phenomenon; perhaps, even, he placed very little faith in the calculations of Kepler. Whatever was the reason, he had grown weary of watching and had left his post. Gassendi had to continue his observations alone, hoping that at least his assistant would return before the planet had passed completely off the sun's face. Fortunately this happened; the requisite observations were made for determining the time of egress; and thus an important addition was made

to our knowledge of the motions of the innermost planet of the solar system.

Gassendi sent an amusing account of his observations to Professor Shickhard of the University of Tübingen. "The crafty god," he wrote, "had sought to deceive astronomers by passing over the sun a little earlier than was expected, and had drawn a veil of dark clouds over the earth in order to make his escape more effectual. But Apollo, acquainted with his knavish tricks from his infancy, would not allow him to pass altogether unnoticed. To be brief, I have been more fortunate than those hunters after Mercury who sought the cunning god in the sun. I found him out, and saw him where no one else had hitherto seen him."

Gassendi relates that the planet as seen projected on the image of the sun did not appear altogether black, but was grayish, and somewhat ruddy round the margin. Doubtless these peculiarities were due to the method of observation made use of by the astronomer. He estimated the apparent diameter of the spot at about one-ninetieth part of the sun's apparent diameter, an estimate considerably exceeding the true dimensions, but still more considerably below the dimensions which astronomers had been disposed to assign to the planet.

Gassendi, although he did not observe the commencement of the transit, was yet able to compute the time of its occurrence. He found that the transit had begun nearly five hours before the time assigned by Kepler.

The second observed transit of Mercury took place on November 8, 1651. The observations of Gassendi had enabled astronomers to estimate the epoch of the transit much more exactly than in the former instance. It resulted from their calculations that the phenomenon would not be visible in England, or indeed in Europe; but would be well seen over a large part of Asia. Accordingly a young Englishman, Jeremiah Shakerley, went to Surat in India, for the purpose of witnessing the phenomenon. Such a journey undertaken for such a purpose in an age when sea-voyages were not only much more protracted, but also far more dangerous than in the present day, must be looked upon as a remarkable and commendable instance of devotion to scientific pursuits. It is pleasing to be able to record that the energy of the young Englishman was rewarded by complete success.

The third observed transit took place on May 8th, 1661. It was observed by Hevelius at Dantzig, and at London by Huyghens, Street, and Mercator. Hevelius was surprised to find that the diameter of the planet was very much smaller than he had been led to expect. He found on measurement that Gassendi's estimate was nearly twice as great as the true diameter of the planet.

The fourth transit of Mercury was observed by Halley at St. Helena on November 7, 1677. He was the first astronomer who had ever observed the complete passage of the planet across the solar disc.

During the transit of 1786, M. Plantade noticed that a luminous ring

appeared to surround the disc of the planet. He was disposed to attribute this appearance to the existence of an atmosphere around Mercury. Other observers have noticed a similar phenomenon during subsequent transits. During the transit of 1799, MM. Schröter and Harding observed it, and described it as a nebulous ring of a dark tinge approaching a violet colour. Dr. Moll, of Utrecht, observed a similar appearance during the transit of 1882.

But we are not justified in concluding that the ring is caused by an atmosphere around the planet. Far more probably it is merely an optical phenomenon, depending on idiosyncrasies either of the observer or the instrument. For during the very transits mentioned above, other observers of equal skill with those we have named and armed with instruments of equal power failed to detect any signs of a ring round the planet. The most eminent modern observers have been similarly unsuccessful during subsequent transits. In fact, if Mercury have an atmosphere at all resembling our own in extent and density, it would be impossible for the most acute observer to detect any indication of its existence. It would merely serve somewhat to round off any inequality which might otherwise appear around the circumference of the planet's disc, but could not possibly be distinguished—so minute would be its relative extent—from the black mass of the planet's body.

Another very singular observation was made during the transit of 1799. Messrs. Schröter and Harding noticed two small spots of a greyish colour on the disc of the planet. During the transit of 1882 Dr. Moll witnessed a similar phenomenon, except that instead of two spots, one only was seen. Again in 1848 Messrs. Reade and Dell noticed a greyish spot with undefined edges. Captain Sir Edward Belcher, R.N., wrote to Professor Powell, that a similar phenomenon was witnessed when the transit of 1848 was observed with Sir James South's great reflecting telescope, when the aperture (nearly one foot) had been reduced by a diaphragm—as is commonly done when the atmosphere is disturbed—to three inches.

It is not easy to explain this singular appearance. If, indeed, there were but one spot, and if this spot were always seen exactly in the middle of the black disc of the planet, it would be easy to account for the appearance. Professor Powell has shown that if a small opaque disc, on a piece of ground glass strongly illuminated from behind, be viewed with a telescope whose aperture has been diminished so as to be very small, an appearance similar to that seen during the transit of 1848 may be noticed. But the appearance of two grey spots, or of a single spot not concentric with the outline of the disc, is by no means explicable in this way. Dr. Moll's drawing, for example, shows that the spot he saw was not concentric with the disc. Professor Powell's explanation requires that the spot should be exactly in the centre of the disc. And, as we have said, Messrs. Schröter and Harding saw two spots. Thus we are compelled to assume that unless Schröter, Harding, and Dr. Moll have been altogether deceived, there are portions of Mercury's surface which have a species of

phosphorescent power, so as to present a greyish appearance even when the light-gathering power of the telescope has been so reduced as to admit of the direct observation of the sun's blazing disc. When we remember that the electric light and the lime light, altogether unbearable through their intensity when viewed alone, appear *absolutely* black when projected on the solar disc, we cannot but feel surprised that any portions of Mercury's surface should appear grey when the planet is transiting the sun. Greyness, under these circumstances, would signify an absolutely unbearable intensity of illumination, if Mercury could be viewed directly without darkening glasses or any of the other arrangements which astronomers are compelled to make use of in viewing the sun. For the present we think the most prudent course is to accept Professor Grant's opinion that "the observations of future transits of the planet can alone throw additional light upon the subject."

When the planet was transiting the sun in November, 1848, the black edge of its disc appeared to one of the observers at Greenwich to be connected for some time with the edge of the solar disc by black lines. This observation, if confirmed, would indicate the existence of very large mountains upon the surface of the planet. Other observers on the same occasion failed to notice any appearance of the sort; but those who are familiar with the difficulties which attend the use of powerful telescopes will fail to recognize in this circumstance any sufficient reason for doubting the correctness of the first observation. One observer may be favoured with a distinct view of an object at the same moment that another observer sees it confused and almost obliterated by atmospheric disturbances. We have ourselves frequently watched a celestial object for nine or ten minutes together without seeing it distinctly for more, perhaps, than a single second of time. A momentary view of this sort might occur at an instant when some remarkable appearance was visible, in the case of one observer, while another observer—perhaps separated only by a few yards from the former—might not have the least suspicion that such an appearance had been observable.

We shall conclude our account of individual transits by recording the observations made during the transit of November 8, 1848, by that most sharp-sighted of all modern observers, the late Mr. W. R. Dawes. He observed the transit at Cranbrook in Kent. He writes:—"Nothing remarkable was noticed until Mercury advanced on the sun's disc to about three-quarters of its own diameter, when the cusps appeared, much rounded off, giving a pear-shaped appearance to the planet. The degree of this deformity varied, however, with the steadiness and definition of the sun's edge, being least when the definition was best. A few seconds before the complete entrance of the planet, the sun's edge became much more steady, and the cusps sharper, though still occasionally a little thicker towards their points by reason of the undulations. At the instant of their junction the definition was pretty good, and they formed the finest conceivable line, Mercury appearing at the same time *perfectly*

round No difference is recognized between the polar and equatorial diameters of this planet; yet my observations, both with a refracting and a reflecting telescope, show a perceptible difference, and nearly to the same amount. . . . The compression of the planet would seem to be about one twenty-ninth."

Intimately associated with the subject we are now considering, is the question of the existence of a planet within the orbit of Mercury. There are instances on record in which circular black spots have been seen to pass across the sun's disc with a rapidity wholly inconsistent with the supposition that they have been solar spots. On October 10, 1802, the astronomer Fritsch saw a round spot of this sort, which moved perceptibly in two minutes, and after a cloudy interval of four hours had disappeared. On October 10, 1819, Stark saw a sharply defined and perfectly round spot, about the size of Mercury, which had disappeared in the evening of the same day. On October 11, 1847, Dr. Julius Schmidt saw a small black spot move swiftly across the sun's disc. On October 14, 1849, the same observer noticed a similar phenomenon. He remarks of the spot seen in this instance that "it was certainly neither a bird nor an insect."

But of all the observations of this sort, that which has attracted most attention is the one claimed to have been made by M. Lescarbault in the spring of 1859.

Leverrier had announced as the result of certain calculations which he had made about the motions of the planet Mercury, that there probably exists a planet which moves between Mercury and the sun, and produces by its attractive influences certain peculiarities in the motion of Mercury which he was unable otherwise to account for. When this announcement was made public, M. Lescarbault, a physician, residing at Orgères, in the department of Eure et Loire, France, was induced to publish the account of an observation which he had made only a few months before. He stated that on March 26, 1859, he had seen an object passing across the sun's disc which he had supposed might be a new planet; but he was unwilling, he said, to announce the discovery he had made, because he imagined that before long he might be able to make confirmatory observations.

Leverrier, with characteristic decision, determined forthwith to obtain a personal interview with the astronomical doctor.

On calling at M. Lescarbault's residence he refused to announce his name, but in brusque and abrupt tones thus accosted the physician,— "So, sir, it is you who pretend to have discovered a new planet, and keep your observations secret for nine months. This is a grave offence. I have come, sir, with the intention of examining your pretensions, and proving that (if you are not dishonest) you have been deceived. Let us hear your story." On this the doctor quietly described the phenomena he had seen. Leverrier asked him by what means he had been enabled to time his observations. The doctor pulled out a watch which had not

even a second-hand. As may be supposed, Leverrier, accustomed to see none but the most perfect time-keepers employed in observations of this sort, was dissatisfied. "My suspicions are confirmed," he cried; "do you pretend with an old watch like that, showing only minutes, to estimate seconds?" Lescarbault replied by producing an ivory ball attached to a silken thread, which he hung on a nail, and caused to oscillate. Leverrier counts the oscillations for a while, and finds that the novel pendulum is marking seconds with a very reasonable approach to accuracy. "But how do you estimate the number of seconds, since there is nothing to mark them?" he asks. Lescarbault states that, being accustomed to feel pulses and count their pulsations, he finds no difficulty in applying a similar process to the pendulum.

The telescope having been submitted to examination, and pronounced satisfactory, Leverrier asks for the memorandum of the observation. Lescarbault searches about for a while, and at length produces the required document,—covered with grease and laudanum. Other questions are asked and satisfactory replies obtained. The doctor's calculations respecting the orbital motion of the supposed planet are not found; but he accounts for this by stating that, being short of paper, his method has been to make his calculations on a plank, and when new ones are required, to make room for them by planing the others off. The loss would not seem to have been great, as Lescarbault was no mathematician.

Finally Leverrier "became perfectly satisfied that an intra-Mercurial planet had been seen. He congratulated the medical practitioner upon his discovery, and left with the intention of making the facts thus obtained the basis of fresh calculations."

Singularly enough, it appeared afterwards that the French astronomer Liais was observing the sun in Brazil at the very hour when Lescarbault saw his planet. Liais is certain that nothing of the kind was visible, although the telescope he was using was much more powerful than the doctor's. On this account great doubt has been thrown on Lescarbault's account. We believe, however, that it is quite possible that M. Liais should have overlooked the planet, despite his opinion to the contrary.

The last observation of the kind which has been made, took place on March 20, 1862. On that day, Mr. Lummis, of Liverpool, was examining the sun's disc, between the hours of nine and ten in the morning, when he noticed a spot, circular in figure and perfectly black in colour. He called a friend to the telescope, and both agreed as to the appearance of the spot. During twenty minutes Mr. Lummis watched the spot travelling rapidly across the sun's disc. He was then called away to attend to official duties, and was unable to observe the object further. He wrote to Hind on the subject, and that eminent astronomer corrected a mistake in Mr. Lummis's estimates.

It will be noticed that all the transits occurred in March and October. It has been calculated that if the observed appearances are really due to the existence of a planet within the orbit of Mercury, transits can only

occur towards the end of March and in the beginning of April, or towards the end of September and in the beginning of October.

On the whole, we think there is good reason for believing in the existence of such a planet. Astronomers, in anticipation of its actual discovery, have assigned to it the name Vulcan.

The transit of Mercury, which takes place on November 5, will be carefully watched by all our best observers. A large number of amateurs will also take part, no doubt, in observing the interesting phenomenon. The construction of cheap telescopes, which yet are capable of doing useful work, has largely increased the number of those who will be able to watch the transit. And, in particular, the recent invention of silvered-glass mirrors by the German optician Steinheil, and the construction in England of a form of reflecting telescope, which is far more convenient to use than the ordinary telescope, has made amateur observation at once more effective and more pleasing than of old. It used to require that a person should really have his heart in the subject of astronomy, to enable him unflinchingly to fix himself in all the various and awkward positions which ordinary telescopic observation requires. Very few could endure with comfort the attitudinizing of the observing-room when elevated objects had to be looked at. But now that an observer can obtain an instrument which is not only cheaper than the old-fashioned refractors, but enables him to observe all objects whatever with his eyes directed horizontally, many, who would otherwise have been deterred from astronomy, are found to take a daily increasing interest in the observation of celestial objects. We trust that no unfavourable circumstances of weather, or the like, will prevent the approaching transit from being well seen by the numerous observers who will be on the watch for the phenomenon.

Critical Elections.

IN writing of the contradictory results of the general election of 1708 and of the general election of 1710, Lord Stanhope observes, with something less than his usual perspicacity, "How strange and sudden are the veerings of popular favour! Some grounds have elsewhere been given that will partly account for these revulsions; but to explain them altogether on anything like reason, or without a liberal allowance for the caprice of popular assemblies, would, I believe, be found as impracticable as to say why the wind should blow from the north to-day and from the south to-morrow." It appears to us, on the contrary, that these revulsions of feeling are often more apparent than real, and that beneath the superficial instability of public opinion which the historian rebukes, the operations of a uniform principle may generally be traced. Even where this is not the case, such oscillations of popular feeling as Lord Stanhope is describing are far from unintelligible or irrational. In the particular instance which he mentions, they represented the perplexity and indecision of the entire nation, swinging doubtfully between the two theories of government, and inclining to one or to the other as the circumstances of the moment swayed them. Such was pre-eminently the condition of the English people during the forty years that passed away between the deposition of King James II. and the death of King George I. While the memory of the Stuarts was still green, while a generation which had personally known them still survived, the old mystic loyalty, though sometimes eclipsed, was never eradicated from the hearts of men; and maintained a nearly equal struggle with the national common-sense view of government and the national dislike of Popery, which formed the mainstay of the new settlement. But as this generation gradually died off, and a new one arose with whom Jacobitism was either a mere idea, or the stalking-horse of political ambition, the oscillation began to cease, and had disappeared altogether before the resignation of Sir Robert Walpole. Vestiges of the old sentiment still lingered in this country, and more than mere vestiges in Scotland. But as a practical influence determining the result of elections and deciding the fate of cabinets, it was obsolete and powerless. Nothing similar to that period of transition has subsequently occurred in England; and we have, accordingly, no similar instances to record of popular "revulsions." But the revulsions which did occur within that period might be accounted for on the grounds above given even were there no others by which some of them at least may be adequately explained.

In giving a brief account of the "critical elections" which have

taken place in England from the reign of Queen Anne to the present day,—meaning by “critical elections” such as have decided either the fate of parties or the fortunes of celebrated Ministers,—we shall begin with the general election of 1710, which to some extent decided both; and is a perfect illustration of those popular reactions which so perplex the historian we have quoted. In April, 1708, the majority returned to the House of Commons had been a Whig majority. The Whig Ministers were the popular Ministers of the day. The Duke of Marlborough was the idol of the nation. The Protestant succession was what no man dared publicly decry. In September, 1710, the Queen was in a position to dismiss her Ministry, to insult the Duke, to call men to her councils who were adverse to the Protestant succession, and afterwards to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the country with an absolute assurance of triumph. No doubt the popular mind had been highly inflamed against the Whigs by the impeachment of Sacheverel. A High Church “cry” had been got up, which was all to the advantage of the Tories. But neither cry nor “caprice” is, in our eyes, sufficient to explain the entire change of mind which the constituencies then displayed.

It was tolerably well known in the country that the sympathies of the Queen, in spite of her intimacy with the Marlboroughs, were all with the exile at St. Germain; and the knowledge was by no means to her detriment. In dismissing Sunderland and Godolphin, and replacing them by Oxford and Bolingbroke, she was supposed to be exercising her own independent will, and to be vindicating the dignity of the crown. Now, curious as it may seem, it appears to us beyond a doubt that multitudes of people who would have hooted at arbitrary power and cheered at parliamentary government, if put to them in those words, would frequently regard with approval the assertion of the royal prerogative. The truth we suspect to be, that the delicacy of the political fiction on which monarchy is based in this kingdom is rather thrown away upon the multitude. They like to see a king or queen *do something*: partly because they think the wearer of the crown ought to do something; partly because a royal act, proceeding from the breast of Majesty in virtue of some undefinable power, and not visibly connected with “law” as they see it in the courts and at assizes, is impressive and imposing, and appeals strongly to the imagination. For this reason alone we could believe that Queen Anne’s change of Ministry was popular, did not contemporary records abundantly justify the hypothesis. In the second place, it is probable, if not certain, that the better informed part of the nation had begun to grow dissatisfied with the continuance of the French war. All the objects for which it was originally undertaken could have been secured at the Congress of Gertruydenberg in 1709; and it was whispered about that it was only prolonged now to gratify the personal ambition of “one too-powerful individual.” With the truth or falsehood of such suspicions we are not concerned. It is certain they were generally entertained; and, coupled with all the burdens of the war, they were quite sufficient to

undermine Marlborough's popularity. Thirdly, there was the old jealousy between the country gentlemen and the nobility; and though the former had too lively a recollection of the civil war to be eager to take arms for the Stuarts, they had no objection to put a slight upon the Whig oligarchy when it could be done without danger of encouraging the Jacobites too much. With a Stuart Queen upon the throne this object was easily attainable, and this last consideration, moreover, has no small share in the difference to be observed between the last two elections which took place in her reign and the elections of 1716. But among these various motives which determined the judgment of the constituents we see little or no evidence of popular caprice. There was, in the first place, one of those temporary reactions of opinion which was characteristic of the period; and there were, secondly, many practical reasons which, rightly or wrongly, had alienated the country from the Whigs: but of mere blind caprice, or inexplicable revulsions of opinion, nothing. Such is the history of the famous elections of 1710, which replaced the Tories in office after twenty years of practical exclusion from it; which finished the career of Marlborough and opened the career of Bolingbroke; which led to a general European settlement in force for more than ninety years, and set an example of commercial liberality which it was reserved for our own generation to acknowledge and adopt.

The elections of 1718,—for these were the days of triennial parliaments,—made little change in the relative strength of parties. But with the spring of 1716 the new dynasty was on the throne, and an appeal was made to the people to confirm the Act of Settlement, and endorse the policy of the Whigs in placing the Elector on the throne. In spite of what had seemed to be the popular sentiment only three years before, the appeal was entirely successful. A large majority was returned in favour of revolution principles; and with permanent results as important as those which we have assigned to the election just described. Parliamentary government, Protestant principles, and the German alliance, the three constituents of English history for at least a century and a half, were then finally established.

But we cannot see that this sudden change in public opinion is any more owing to caprice than the previous one. Between a Stuart on the throne and a Stuart in exile, the difference was considerable. The Tory country gentlemen were afraid of another civil war. To expel George I. now would require another civil war. Yet with George upon the throne the Whigs, they well knew, would monopolize all the sweets of office and all the indirect advantages of power. It was not worth their while then to sit in *that* House of Commons. In the next place the restoration of the Stuarts had now come to be associated in the popular mind with the idea of a French invasion; and this cooled their ardour not a little in favour of that luckless cause. Lastly, by the impeachment of Bolingbroke and Ormond, and the general dispersion of its leaders, the whole Tory party were left like sheep without a shepherd. They had no one to direct them in

the manifold intricacies of electioneering. They had no "cry:" a more important point in those days than it is even in our own. If to all these various reasons we add the absence of such causes of discontent as the attack on Sacheverel and the prolongation of the French war, we shall see that there was plenty to account for the general election of 1716 without falling back upon the agency of popular caprice. It is remarkable, however, and it illustrates what we just now said of the oscillation of public opinion during the period in question, that immediately after this election, the Whig administration began to see the necessity of providing against another "revulsion" of opinion to be apprehended at the next. In February, 1716, this Parliament was returned; and before the end of April the Septennial Act had passed both Houses. The almost equal struggle between the old principles and the new had been inclined one way by the circumstances of 1710, and another by the circumstances of 1716. Who was to say that a third set of circumstances might not turn the scale once more in 1719?

The Septennial Act fulfilled its object. By 1722 the Whigs^a were confirmed in power. Jacobitism was beginning to pass into that second stage which we have described. And from 1716 to 1784, one general election was like another, no fair trial of strength between the two parties having occurred at any one of them. Our next "critical election" accordingly comes before us upon another scene, under new conditions, when political parties had been shuffled and dealt out afresh, and when the members of the House of Commons who had been elected because they were Jacobites might have been counted on one's fingers. Not that an extensive Jacobite conspiracy did not exist in England during the whole twenty years, perhaps, that elapsed between the death of the Regent Orleans and the landing of Prince Charles Edward; but the cause had lost its hold upon the nation, and no longer in any appreciable degree influenced elections.

In 1784, then, there was an appeal to the constituencies by the Opposition and the Government, such as we are now accustomed to, upon general questions of policy, and without, as far as we can learn, any tacit reference even to the exiled family. The Opposition was sanguine of success. They had two excellent cries, the Excise Scheme, and the Septennial Act, which was very unpopular, and which Ministers had refused to repeal. But more than all this, Government had for the last eight years been exposed to a species of warfare in which Ministers were at a marked disadvantage. Literature was on the side of the Tories. The reasons why it was so are too well known to be repeated. And at the head of the body of guerillas who harassed the Ministry from all sides was the vengeful spirit and the piercing pen of Bolingbroke himself. Whatever can be done by political journalism to blacken the character and distort the policy of a rival statesman, it may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the *Craftsman* did. Walpole, on the other hand, secure of the court; as unscrupulous in his means as we believe he was honest in

his ends ; and relying, with just confidence, on the beneficent character of his long administration, was not afraid of the result, though far too wise to be careless. Towards the expenses of the election he is said to have contributed no less a sum than 60,000*l.* out of his own pocket. But the event, though a disappointment to the Tories, was on the whole discouraging to the Minister. The battle was fought out in April, and conducted with uncommon acrimony in all parts of the kingdom. The result was to lessen the Ministerial majority by about one-third ; but to leave the Opposition at the same time just as far from office as ever. Bolingbroke stopped the *Craftsman*, and retired to the Continent. The old Tory leaders, Shippen, Wyndham, Barnard, who had borne the burden and heat of the day, saw the prize for which they had long contended snatched from their grasp. With the election of 1784 vanished the last chance which had arisen since the death of Queen Anne of a pure Tory administration. The time was not yet. At the next critical election the Whigs indeed were turned out ; but the Tories were not brought in.

This election took place exactly seven years afterwards, in 1741, and the result, as all the world knows, was the defeat and resignation of Sir Robert Walpole. But, after all, this was only the concluding act of the drama begun in '84 ; and the final result proved that though the Minister had lost his popularity, the resolution at which the country had arrived in 1716 was still dominant in England. Shortly after the last-mentioned year, the oscillation between Jacobitism and "Guelphism" had begun to subside, and the public remained steady to Whig principles for upwards of fifty years. In 1784, the Tories of the Bolingbroke school—a class of Tories distinct alike from Jacobites, Peelites, or Eldonites—had their chance, fought their battle, and lost it, and from that time forth ceased to exist as a substantive power in the State. The election of 1741 accomplished one-half of their original design, and overthrew Walpole ; but it brought no advantage to themselves. Within three years of the great Opposition triumph, a steady, old-fashioned Whig government, slightly reinforced by the "Patriots," was again in office under Henry Pelham, who retained power till his death, eleven years afterwards, and bequeathed it to his party for another twelve or fifteen years.

We have now to take a considerable leap in advance before we come to another election which deserves the title of "critical." After the death of George II., the nation was gradually converted to Toryism by the character and conduct of his successor, who, whatever he might appear to those who had opportunities of knowing him, to the great mass of the people was an object of the sincerest veneration. But the change was gradual both in the country and the House of Commons, and not the result of any sudden "revulsion of feeling" or special appeal to the constituencies. The general election of 1784 is remarkable rather for having shown that although the House of Commons had deserted the principles on which it was returned, the people were still true to them. The Parliament which was dissolved in 1784, had been elected in 1780, when it was

found, contrary to the expectations of the Opposition, that the country was in favour of the Government, and that Lord North's majority was little, if at all, diminished. In other words, the House of Commons in which the celebrated Coalition Ministry was formed against the King's party, was the very same House of Commons which had been elected to support the King. Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that on the first appeal to the people the Coalition was scattered to the winds? It has often seemed to us that this memorable election has been a good deal misunderstood. Undoubtedly Fox's India Bill created great alarm in certain quarters; and the gallantry of Mr. Pitt had enlisted the sympathies of the people. But no special causes were required to produce the great Tory majority which was the fruits of the election. The electors of 1784 were the electors of 1774, and the electors of 1780. They had returned a large Tory majority on the two first occasions, and why should they not again? Though many of the old Tory party in the House of Commons, disgusted with the American war, had followed Lord North in his desertion of his old principles and his alliance with the Whig oligarchy, yet public feeling had not changed. The election which followed was only the undoing of the coalition, and the restoration of the *status quo*. The Tory majority of Lord North became the Tory majority of Mr. Pitt. The current resumed its course, and Government proceeded as before.

Probably there has been no election in our annals, if we except 1831, when the dominant party in Parliament met with so complete and so sudden a chastisement at the hands of the people as they did at the period in question. One hundred and sixty supporters of the Coalition lost their seats; and it was doubtful for a time whether even Mr. Fox would be re-elected for Westminster. The aristocratic interest in Yorkshire, which, in the pointed language of Macaulay, had made the county like a Whig borough, was beaten out of the field by Mr. Wilberforce. Mr. Hill came in at the head of the poll for the University of Cambridge. The discomfiture of the Whigs in 1710 was a drawn battle compared to the rout of 1784. The decisive and permanent effects of *this* election are too well known to be repeated. It seated the Tories in office for forty-eight years, and Mr. Pitt, with a brief intermission, for his life. And it was not until a new generation had grown up, and new ideas and new wants taken possession of the public mind, that the Whigs recovered from the blow. Thus we see that the four critical elections of the last century were in 1710, in 1716, in 1784, and in 1784,—two of them favourable to the Whigs, and two to the Tories. But in none of the three which involved great and sudden changes do we observe any agency at work which can properly be called caprice. Both in 1710 and in 1784 the people were really glad to see the royal prerogative exerted; and we have pointed out the reasons which they had for believing that it was, in one instance at least, exerted on the right side. But no one who studies attentively the history of the eighteenth century can fail to perceive that the independence of the Crown was always a favourite idea with the

English people, and that the hustings orator who was capable of painting with effect the thralldom of his gracious sovereign, and his own loyal resolve to assist in the work of emancipation, was certain of vociferous applause. This sentiment was at the bottom of the Tory successes both in 1710 and in 1784. The Whig victories, on the other hand, were owing to two equally deeply rooted sentiments in the English mind,—the dread of Popery, and the pride which bristled at the notion of the Stuarts riding back on French bayonets. This very same feeling cost William his Dutch Guards, and but for that, would have cost him his throne. And although the avowed Jacobites felt that nothing could be done without French assistance, the very necessity discredited the cause in the eyes of the nation at large.

The next really critical election that we have to record brings us down to a period within the memory of middle-aged men, and is hardly beyond the limits of contemporary history; we mean, of course, the memorable and decisive election of 1831. In this we see the results of a change in public opinion which had been gradually maturing for many years, and not merely one of the extreme oscillations which belong to a period of transition. The slow, half-conscious growth of a spirit of Liberalism, which had been in progress during the Regency and the reign of George IV., was analogous rather to the growth of that new Toryism which took place after the accession of George III. than to those "revulsions of feeling" which occurred half a century before: whether with or without reason, the people at the one time had grown tired of the Whigs, and at the other had grown tired of the Tories. And it is wonderful still to reflect on the energy and enthusiasm which sustained the independent electors in their great struggle against all the old influences by which they had so long been guided. In the English counties, where, however, the Whigs had of late years commanded a small majority, almost every election went in favour of the Reformers. In the open boroughs the same spirit was victorious. And when Parliament reassembled the Ministerial majority of one was changed into 186. The work of 1784 was thoroughly undone; the great party which had ruled for forty-seven years completely broken up, never again to be reunited upon the same or even a kindred basis. But it would be as great a mistake to attribute this result exclusively to the operation of Reform as to attribute the results of 1784 exclusively to the unpopularity of the India Bill. A long train of causes had been silently at work, in each case paving the way for the great revolution that ensued. And we believe it will be found that in all cases of critical elections, excepting such as have occurred during exceptional and transitional epochs, the same law has been at work. Revolutions on a small scale, they resemble revolutions on a large scale. The ostensible cause is never the real cause, or certainly never the only cause. The forthcoming election will probably be another case in point. It will not be decided exclusively on the merits of the Irish Church.

The election of 1841, though certainly, according to our own defini-

tion, a critical election, and though apparently evincing a great and sudden change in popular opinion, was not in reality any sign that the people of this country had abandoned the ideas which had inspired them only nine years before. Many of the Whig leaders were personally unpopular, while the whole party reaped the fruits of those exaggerated promises in which the champions of reform had rashly permitted themselves to indulge. The Reform Bill had not touched those hardships which it was expected instantaneously to cure. Wages had not risen; bread was found to be as dear under the new system as it had been under the old. The new Poor Law did not propitiate the poor; while Whig finance and Whig foreign policy were viewed with suspicion by the rich. A Whig Government had its Newport riots as a Tory Government its Manchester riots. All these causes are quite sufficient to account for the extraordinary "Conservative triumph" of 1841. But the reader will see at a glance that it was purely a matter of administration; no principle was affected by it, as had been the case in 1784 and in 1831. By returning a Conservative majority under Sir Robert Peel, the people were not in the least going back from the principles they had adopted in the Reform Bill. Wiser and more experienced than his predecessors, he still substantially carried out a liberal system of government. There was, in fact, nothing *distinctive* in the "great Conservative party" which the elections of 1841 brought into power, as there had been in the Tory party of Mr. Pitt and the Whig party of Lord Grey. And the best proof of it is that power very soon slid back again into the old hands. What we mean is, that the appeal to the country in 1831 produced as great and as lasting a change as the appeal of 1784 or of 1716; and that the Ministry of Sir Robert Peel was no real break in the continuity of the political system which has prevailed ever since. What is true of 1841 is *a fortiori* true of all the elections which have followed it. Is it probable that the elections of 1868 will be the first interruption to the series?

We have already stated our opinion that the result of it will not depend exclusively on the Irish Church question. Votes will be given for the Liberals by men not hostile to that church. Votes will be given for the Conservatives by men who disapprove of that church. A broader question than this will virtually be submitted to the new constituencies, namely, whether, on the whole, the party whose principles have been dominant for the last generation, or the party which has only recently succeeded in obtaining power, be the one which they prefer to govern them. The more closely one studies the history of the last ten years the more difficult does it seem to believe that any deeply seated change has been coming over the temper of the people similar to those we have described at previous periods. On the surface of society, at all events, there appear no marks of such a change. But just as we have said that the return of a Conservative majority in 1841 was really no departure from the principles of 1832, so it might happen now that a Conservative majority should be returned owing to accidental preferences, and without affording any proof of a

permanent and fundamental reaction. The habits and modes of thought of the working classes are, notwithstanding the investigations of the new school of philanthropists, still so little understood, the effect upon their minds of an appeal to the old anti-papal prejudice is so difficult to be estimated that he would be a bold man indeed who should venture to predict with confidence the issue of the approaching contest. But whatever it may be, of one thing we can hardly allow ourselves to doubt. Should the superior management, and the strength of a particular prejudice, return to the next House of Commons a majority for the existing Cabinet, that Cabinet will have to accommodate itself to the spirit of the last thirty years, and be in fact, as in name, "truly liberal." On the various occasions we have mentioned, not only were great parties and great Ministers confirmed in, or expelled from, power; but new principles of government were recognized or perpetuated. But the English nation has not been reconverted to Conservatism as it was understood thirty years ago. So far, therefore, the elections of 1868 will not take rank with those great elections which changed the principles on which this kingdom was to be governed. But it will be as important as that of 1784, when a final appeal to the nation was made by a great party, whose existence was staked on the result, and whose dissolution was the virtual consequence. Had the Tories come into power in 1784, they would not, after all, have materially modified the Whig system of administration, just as, if they remain in now, they cannot materially modify the Liberal system. The verdict of the country on the former occasion was that they would have none of that party. The time had not arrived when its distinctive principles could be useful. The fact that the Tory party now is in office, and was then out of office, makes no real difference. They are the minority appealing to the nation to reverse its last verdict recorded in favour of their opponents. Should their appeal be successful it will, however, as in the case of 1841, be merely a temporary accident, and not indicative of any permanent or long-matured revolution of opinion.

From an Island.

PART I.

I.



THE long room was full of people sitting quietly in the twilight. Only one lamp was burning at the far end. The verandah outside was dim with shadow; between each leafy arch there glimmered a line of sea and of down. It was a grey still evening, sad, with distant storms. St. Julian, the master of the house, was sitting under the verandah, smoking, with William, the eldest son. The mother and Mrs. William were on a sofa together, talking in a low voice over one thing and another. Hester was sitting at the piano with her hands in her lap, looking music, though she was not playing, with her white dress quivering in the gloom. Lord Ulleskelf, who had come over to see us, was talking to

Emilia, the married daughter, and to Aileen, the youngest of the three; while I and my own little Mona and the little ones were playing at the other end of the room at a sort of twilight game of beating hands and singing sing-song nursery-rhymes,—haymaking the children called it.

"Are there any letters?" said St. Julian, looking in at them all from his verandah. "Has Emmy got hers?"

"I have sent Rogers into Tarmouth to meet the post," said the mother; and as she spoke the door opened, and the post came in.

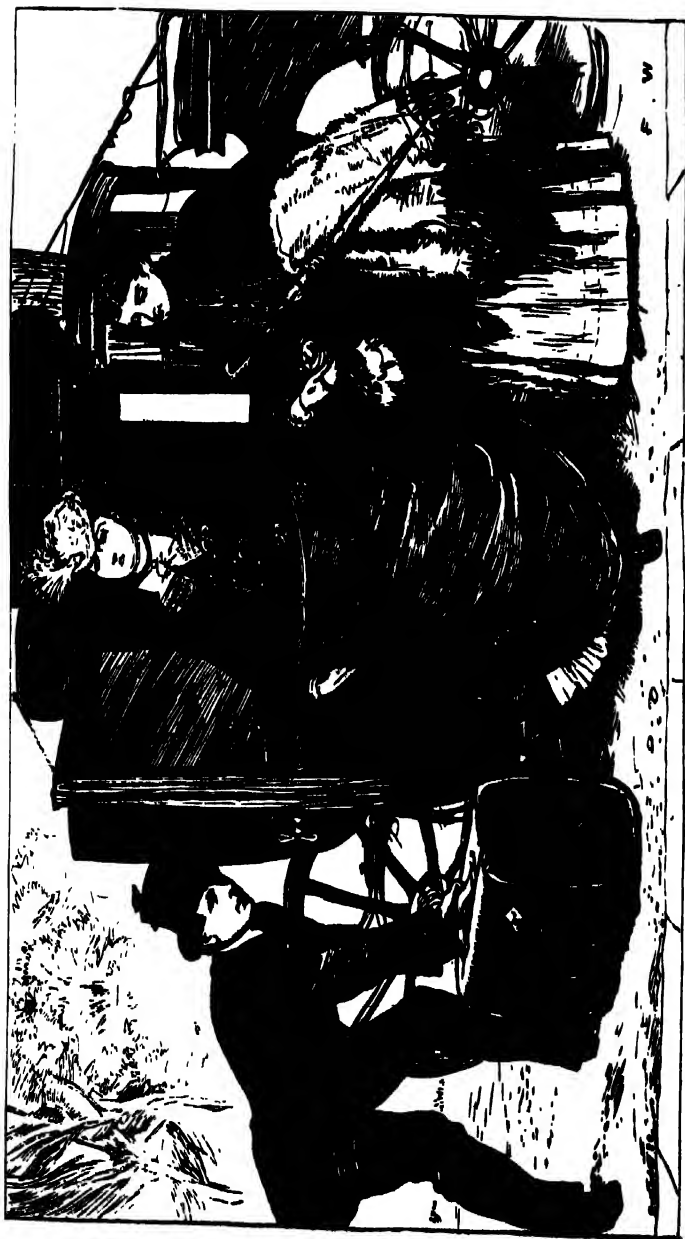
Poor Emmy's face, which had lighted up eagerly, fell in an instant: she saw that there was no foreign letter for her.

It was a small mail, not worth sending for, Mrs. St. Julian evidently thought as she looked at her daughter with her kind, anxious eyes. "Here is something for you, Emmy," she said; "for you, Queenie" (to me). "My letter is from Mr. Hexham; he is coming to-morrow."

My letter was from the grocer:—

Mrs. CAMPBELL is respectfully informed by Mr. Tiggs that he has sent different samples of tea and coffee for her approbation, for the use of Mr. St. Julian's household and family; also a choice assortment of sperms. Mr. Tiggs regrets extremely that any delay should have arisen in the delivery of the preserved cherries and

LADY JANE.



apricots. He forwards the order this day, as per invoice. Mr. T. trusts that his unremitting exertions may meet with Mrs. C.'s approval and continued recommendation and patronage.

Albert Edward House, September 21.

This was not very interesting, except to the housekeeper: Mrs. St. Julian had set me to keep house for her down here in the country. The children, however, who generally insisted upon reading all my correspondence, were much excited by the paragraph in which Mr. Tiggs mentioned cherries and dried apricots. "Why did Mr. Tiggs forget them?" said little Susan, the granddaughter, solemnly. "Oh, I wish they would come," said Nelly. "Greedy, greedy!" sung George, the youngest boy. Meanwhile the elders were discussing their correspondence, and the mother had been reading out Mr. Hexham's note:—

Lyndhurst, September 21.

HAVE you room for me, my dear Mrs. St. Julian, and may I come to-morrow for a few days with my van? I find it is a most delightful mode of conveyance, and I have been successful enough to take some most lovely photographic views in the New Forest. I now hope to explore your island, beginning with the "Lodges," if you are still in the same hospitable mind you were when I last saw you.

With best remembrances to your Husband and the young Ladies,

Your devoted,

G. HEXHAM.

"I like Mr. Hexham. I am glad he is coming," said Mrs. St. Julian.

"This is an official-looking missive," said Lord Ulleskelf, holding out the large square envelope, with a great red seal, which had come for Emmy.

"What a handwriting!" cried Aileen. She was only fifteen, but she was taller already than her married sister, and stood reading over her shoulder. "What a letter! Oh, Emmy, what a —"

But Mrs. St. Julian, seeing Emmy flush up, interposed again:—

"Aileen, take those papers to your father. What is it, my dear?" to Emilia.

"It is from my sister-in-law," Emilia said, blushing in the light of the lamp. "Mamma, what a trouble I am to you. . . . She says she is—may she come to stay? . . . And—and—you see she is dear Bevis's sister, and —"

"Of course, my dear," said her mother, almost reproachfully. "How can you ask?"

Emilia looked a little relieved, but wistful still. "Have you room? To-morrow?" she faltered.

Mrs. St. Julian gave her a kiss, and smiled and said, "Plenty of room, my goose." And then she read,—

To the Hon. Mrs. BEVIS BEVERLEY,

The Island,

Tarmouth,

Broadshire.

MY DEAR EMILIA,—

Scudamore Castle, September 21.

BEVIS told me to be sure and pay you a visit in his absence, if I had an opportunity, and so I shall come, if convenient to you, with my maid and a man, on

Saturday, across country from Sendamoro Castle. I hear I must cross from Hilmington. I cannot imagine how people can live on an island when there is the mainland for them to choose. Yours is not even an island on the map. Things have been very pleasant here till two days ago, when it began to pour with rain, and my stepmother arrived unexpectedly with Clem, and Clem lost her temper, and Pritchard spoilt my new dress, and several pleasant people went away, and I, too, determined to take myself off. I shall only stay a couple of days with you, so pray tell Mrs. St. Julian that I shall not, I hope, be much in her way. Do not let her make any changes for me; I shall be quite willing to live exactly as you are all in the habit of doing. Any room will do for my man. The maid need only have a little room next to mine. You won't mind, I know, if I go my own gait while I stay with you, for I am an odd creature, as I dare say you may have often heard from Bevis. I expect to feel dreadfully small with all of you clever artistic people, but I shall be safe from my lady and Clem, who would never venture to come near you.

My father is all alone at home, and I want to get back to him if I can steal a march on my lady. She is so jealous that she will not let me be alone with him for one hour if she can help it, in her absence. Before she left Castlerookham she sent for that odious sister of hers to play picquet with him, and there was a general scene when I objected. My father took part against me, so I started off in a huff, but he has managed to shake off the old wretch, I hear, and so I do not mind going back. I must say it is very pleasant to have a few halfpence that one can call one's own, and to be able to come and go one's own way. I assure you that the said halfpence do not last for ever, however. Clem took 50*l.* to pay her milliner's bill, and Bevis borrowed 100*l.* before he left, but I dare say he will pay me back.

So good-by, my dear Emilia, for the present.

Yours ever,

JANE BEVERLEY.

Mrs. St. Julian did not offer to show Lady Jane's letter to St. Julian, but folded it up with a faint little suppressed smile. "I think she must be a character, Emmy," she said. "I dare say she will be very happy with us. Queenie" (to me), "will you see what can be done to make Lady Jane comfortable?" and there was an end of the matter. Lord Ulleskelf went and sat out in the verandah with the others until the storm burst which had been gathering, through which he insisted on hurrying home, notwithstanding all they could say to detain him.

We had expected Lady Jane by the boat which brought our other guest the next day, but only Mr. Hexham's dark close-cropped head appeared out of the carriage which had been sent to meet them. The coachman declared there was no lady alone on board. Emilia wondered whether sister-in-law had failed: the others took Lady Jane's absence very calmly, and after some five o'clock ten St. Julian proposed a walk.

"Perhaps I had better stay," Mrs. Beverley said to her mother.

"No, my dear, your father will be disappointed. She cannot come now," said Mrs. St. Julian, decidedly; "and if she does, I am here to receive her. Mr. Hexham, you did not see her on board? A lady alone?" . . .

No. Hexham had not seen any lone lady on board. There was a good-looking person who might have answered the description, but she

had a gentleman with her. He lost sight of them at Tarmouth, as he was looking after his man, and his van, and his photographic apparatus. It was settled Lady Jane could not possibly come till next day.

II.

Lady Jane Beverley had always declared that she hated three things — islands, clever people, and interference. She knew she was clever, but she did not encourage this disposition. It made people bores and radical in her own class of life, and forward if they were low. She was not pretty. No; she didn't care for beauty, though she confessed she should be very sorry if she was not able to afford to dress in the last fashion. It was all very well for artists and such people to say the contrary, but she knew that a plain woman well dressed would look better than the loveliest dowdy that ever tied her bonnet-strings crooked. It was true her brother Bevis had thought otherwise. He had married Emilia, who was not in his own rank of life; but Lady Jane supposed he had taught her to dress properly after her marriage. She had done her very best to dissuade him from that crazy step: once it was over she made the best of it, though none of them would listen to her; and indeed she had twice had to lend him sums of money when his father stopped his allowance. It is true he paid her back, otherwise she really did not know how she could have paid her bills that quarter. If she had not had her own independence she scarcely could have got on at all or borne with all Lady Mountmore's whims. However, thanks to old aunt Adelaide, she need not think of anybody but herself, and that was a very great comfort to her in her many vexations. As it was, Clem was for ever riding Bazook, and laming her ponies, and borrowing money. Beverley and Bevis, of course, being her own brothers, had a right to expect she would be ready to lend them a little now and then; but really Clem was only her step-sister, and considering the terms she and Lady Mountmore were on. . . . Lady Jane had a way of rambling on, though she was a young woman still, not more than six or seven and twenty. It was quite true that she had had to fight her own battles at home, or she would have been utterly fleeced and set aside. Beverley, her eldest brother, never quite forgave her for being the old aunt's heiress, and did not help her as he should have done. Bevis was always away on his missions or in disgrace. Old Lord Mountmore was feeble and almost childish. Lady Mountmore was not a pleasant person to deal with, and such heart as she possessed was naturally given to Lady Clem, her own child.

Lady Jane was fortunately not of a sensitive disposition. She took life calmly, and did not yearn for the affection that was not there to get, but she made the best of things, and when Bevis was sent to South America on a mission, she it was who brought about a sort of general reconciliation. She was very much pleased with herself on this occasion. Everybody looked to her, and consulted her. "You will go and see Emmy sometimes, won't you, Jane?" said poor Bevis, who was a kind

and handsome young fellow. 'Lady Jane said, "Most likely," and congratulated herself on her own tact and success on this occasion, as well as on her general ways, looks, style, and position in life. She thought poor Emmy was not certainly worth all this fuss, but determined to look after her. Lady Jane was rather Low Church, slightly suspicious, but good-natured and not unamenable to reason. She cultivated an abrupt frankness and independence of manner. Her frankness was almost bewildering at times, as Lady Jane expected her dictums to be received in silence and humility by the unlucky victims of her penetration. But still, as I have said, being a true-hearted woman, if she was once convinced that she was in the wrong, she would always own to it. Marriage was rather a sore subject with this lady. She had once notified to a young evangelical rector that although his prospects were not brilliant, yet she was not indisposed to share them, if he liked to come forward. To her utter amazement, the young man got up in a confused manner, walked across the room, talked to Lady Clem for the rest of his visit, and never called again. Lady Jane was much surprised; but, as her heart was not deeply concerned in the matter, she forgave him on deliberation. The one softness in this strange woman's nature lay in her love for children. Little Bevis, her brother's baby, would coo at her, and beat her high cheek-bones with his soft little fat hand; she let him pull her hair, the curls, and frills, and plaits of an hour's erection, poke his fingers into her eyes, swing her watch violently round and round. She was still too young to have crystallized into a regular old maid. She had never known any love in her life except from Bevis, but Bevis had been a little afraid of her. Beverley was utterly indifferent to anybody but himself.

Lady Jane had fifteen hundred a year of her own. She was not at all bad-looking. Her thick reddish hair was of the fashionable colour. She was a better woman than some people gave her credit for being, seeing this tall over-dressed and overbearing young person going about the world with her two startled attendants and her hunters. Lady Jane had not the smallest sense of humour or feeling for art: at least, this latter faculty had never been cultivated, though she had furnished her boudoir with bran new damask and sprawling gilt legs, and dressed herself in the same style; and had had her picture taken by some travelling artist—a pastille all frame and rose-coloured chalk—which hung up over her chimney, smirking at a rose, to the amusement of some of her visitors. Lady Jane's notion of artists and art were mainly formed upon this trophy, and by what she had seen of the artist who had produced it. Lady Clem used to say that Jane was a born old maid, and would never marry; but everybody was not of that opinion. Lady Jane had been made a great deal of at Scudamore Castle, especially by a certain Captain Sigourney, who had been staying there, a nephew of Lady Scudamore's,—tall, dark, interesting, in want of money, notwithstanding his many accomplishments. Poor Tom Sigourney had been for many years a hanger-on at Scudamore. They were extremely tired of him, knew his words, looks, tones by heart. Handsome as he

undoubtedly was, there was something indescribably wearisome about him after the first introduction—a certain gentle drawl and prose that irritated some people. But Lady Jane was immensely taken by him. His deference pleased her. She was not insensible to the respectful flattery with which he listened to every word she spoke. Tom Sigourney said she was a fine spirited girl, and Lady Scudamore seized the happy occasion—urged Tom forward, made much of Lady Jane. “Poor girl! she needs a protector,” said Lady Scudamore gravely to her daughters. At which the young ladies burst out laughing. “Can you fancy Tom Sigourney taking care of anybody?” they cried.

Lady Mountmore arrived unexpectedly, and the whole little fabric was destroyed. Sigourney, who had not much impudence, was simply driven off the field by the elder lady’s impertinences. Lady Jane was indignant, and declared she should not stay any longer under the same roof as her mother-in-law. Lady Scudamore did not press her to remain. She had not time to attend to her any longer or to family dissensions; but she did write a few words to Tom, telling him of Lady Jane’s movements, and then made it up with Lady Mountmore all the more cordially that she felt she had not been quite loyal to her in sending off this little missive.

The little steamer starts for Tarmouth in a little crowd and excitement of rolling barrels and oxen driven and plunging sheep in barges. The people come and look over the side of the wooden pier and talk to the captain at his wheel. Afternoon rays stream slant, and the island glistens across the straits, and the rocks stand out in the water; limpid waters beat against the rocks, and toss the buoys and splash against the busy little tug; one or two coal-barges make way. Idlers and a child or two in the way of the half-dozen passengers are called upon by name to stand aside on this occasion. There are two country dames returning from market; friend Hexham in an excitement about his van, which is to follow in a barge; and there is a languid dark handsome gentleman talking to a grandly dressed lady whose attendants have been piling up wraps and *Times* and dressing-cases and umbrellas.

“Let me hold this for you, it will tire you,” said the gentleman, tenderly taking *The Times* out of her hand; “are you resting? I thought I would try and meet you, and see if I could save you from fatigue. My aunt Scudamore told me you were coming this way. There, that is where my people live: that white house among the trees.”

“It is a nice place,” said Lady Jane.

The rocks were coming nearer, and the island was brightening to life and colour, and the quaint old bricks and terraces of Tarmouth were beginning to show. There was a great ship in the distance sliding out to sea, and a couple of gulls flew overhead.

“Before I retired from the service,” said Sigourney, “I was quartered at Portsmouth. I know this coast well; that is Tarmouth opposite, and that is—ah, ‘m—a pretty place, and an uncommon pretty girl at the hotel.”

"How am I to get to these people if they have not sent to meet me, I wonder?" interrupted Lady Jane, rather absently.

"Leave that to me," said Captain Sigourney; "I am perfectly at home here, and I will order a fly. They all know me, and if they are not engaged will always come for me. You go to the inn. I order you a cup of tea, and one for your maid. I see a fast horse put up into a trap, and start you straight off."

"Oh, Captain Sigourney, I am very much obliged," said Lady Jane; and so the artless conversation went on.

At Tarmouth the ingenious captain would not let her ask whose was a carriage she saw standing there, nor take one of the two usual flies in waiting, but he made her turn into the inn until a special fast horse, with whose paces he was well acquainted, could be harnessed. This took a long time; but Lady Jane, excited by the novelty of the adventure, calmly enjoyed her afternoon tea and devotion, and sat on the horse-hair sofa of the little inn, admiring the stuffed carp and cuttle-fish on the walls, and listening with a charmed ear to Tom's reminiscences of the time when he was quartered at Portsmouth.

The fast horse did not go much quicker than his predecessors, and Lady Jane arrived at the Lodges about an hour after Hexham, and at the same time as his great photographic van.

III.

They were all strolling along the cliffs towards the beacon. It stood upon the summit of High Down, a long way off as yet, though it seemed close at hand, so clearly did it stand out in the still atmosphere of the sunset. It stood there stiff and black upon its knoll, an old weather-beaten stick with a creaking coop for a crown, the pivot round which most of this little story turns. For when these holiday people travelled away out of its reach, they also passed out of my ken. We could see the beacon from most of our windows, through all the autumnal clematis and ivy sprays falling and drifting about. The children loved the beacon, and their little lives were one perpetual struggle to reach it, in despite of winds, of time of meals, of tutors and lessons. The elders, too, loved it after their fashion. Had they not come and established themselves under the shadow of High Down, where it had stood as long as the oldest inhabitant could remember! Lord Ulleskelf, in his yacht out at sea, was always glad to see the familiar old stubby finger rising up out of the mist. My cousin, St. Julian the R.A., had made a strange rough sketch of it, and of his wife and her eldest daughter sitting beneath it; and a sea, and a cloud horizon, grey, green, mysterious beyond. He had painted a drapery over their heads, and young Emilia's arms round the stem. It was an awful little picture Emilia the mother thought when she saw it, and she begged her husband to turn its face to the wall in his studio.

"Don't you see how limpid the water is, and how the mist is trans-

parent and drifting before the wind?" St. Julian said. "Why do you object, you perverse woman?"

The wife didn't answer, but her soft cheeks flushed. Emilia the daughter spoke, a little frightened.

"They are like mourners, papa," she whispered.

St. Julian shrugged his shoulders at them. "And this is a painter's wife!" he cried; "and a painter's daughter!" But he put the picture away, for he was too tender to pain them, and it lay now forgotten in a closet. This was two years ago, before Emilia was married, or had come home with her little son during her husband's absence. She was carrying the child in her arms as she toiled up the hill in company with the others, a tender bright flush in her face. Her little Bevis thinks it is he who is carrying "Mozzer," as he clutches her tight round the neck with his two little arms.

I suppose nobody ever reached the top of a high cliff without some momentary feeling of elation,—so much left behind, so much achieved. There you stand at peace, glowing with exertion, raised far above the din of the world. They were gazing as they came along (for it is only of an island that I am writing) at the great sight of shining waters, of smiling fertile fields and country; and of distant waters again, that separated them from the pale glimmering coast of the mainland. The straits, which lie between the island and Broadshire, are not deserted like the horizon on the other side (it lies calm, and tossing, and self-sufficing, for the coast is a dangerous one, and little frequented); but are crowded and alive with boats and white sails: ships go sliding past, yachts drift, and great brigs slowly travel in tow of the tiny steamer that crosses and recrosses the water with letters and provisions, and comers and goers and guests to Ulles Hall and to the Lodge, where St. Julian and his family live all through the summer-time; and where some of us indeed remain the whole year round.

The little procession comes winding up the down, Lord Ulleskelf and the painter walking first, in broad-brimmed hats and coats fashioned in the island, of a somewhat looser and more comfortable cut than London coats. The tutor is with them. Mr. Hexham, too, is with them; as I can see, a little puzzled and interested by the ways of us islanders.

As St. Julian talks his eyes flash, and he puts out one hand to emphasize what he is saying. He is not calm and self-contained as one might imagine so great a painter, but a man of strong convictions; alive to every life about him and to every event. His cordial heart and bright artistic nature are quickly touched and moved. He believes in his own genius, grasps at life as it passes, and translates it into a strange quaint revelation of his own, and brings others into his way of seeing things almost by magic. But his charm is almost irresistible, and he knows it, and likes to know it. The time that he is best himself is when he is at his painting; his brown eyes are alight in his pale face, his thick gray hair stands on end; he is a middle-aged man, broad, firmly-knit,

with a curly grey beard, active, mighty in his kingdom. He lets people in to his sacred temple; but he makes them put their shoes off, so to speak, and will allow no word of criticism except from one or two. In a moment his thick brows knit, and the master turns upon the unlucky victim.

The old tutor had a special and unlucky knack of exciting St. Julian's ire. He teaches the boys as he taught St. Julian in bygone days, but he cannot forget that he is not always St. Julian's tutor, and constantly stings and irritates him with his caustic disappointed old wits. But St. Julian bears it all with admirable impatience for the sake of old days and of age and misfortune.

As they all climb the hill together on this special day, the fathers go walking first, then comes a pretty rout of maidens and children, and Hexham's tall dark head among them. Little Mona goes wandering by the edge of the cliff, with her long gleaming locks hanging in ripples not unlike those of the sea. The two elder girls had come out with some bright-coloured scarves tied round their necks; but finding them oppressive, they had pulled them off, and given them to the boys to carry. These scarves were now banners streaming in the air as the boys attacked a tumulus, where the peaceful bones of the bygone Danish invaders were lying buried. The gay young voices echo across the heather calling to each other.

Hester comes last with Mrs. William—Hester with the mysterious sweet eyes and crown of soft hair. It is not very thick, but like a dark yet gleaming cloud about her pretty head. She is quite pale, but her lips are bright carnation red, and when she smiles she blushes. Hester is tall, as are all the sisters, Emilia Beverley, and Aileen, who is only fifteen, but the tallest of the three. Aileen is walking a little ahead with Mrs. William's children, and driving them away from the edge of the cliff, towards which these little moths seem perpetually buzzing.

The sun begins to set in a strange wild glory, and the light to flow along the heights; all these people look to one another like beatified men and women. Ulleskelf and St. Julian cease their discussion at last, and stand looking seawards.

"Look at that band of fire on the sea," said Lord Ulleskelf.

"What an evening vesper," said St. Julian. "Hester, are you there?"

Hester was there, with sweet, wondering sunset eyes. Her father put his hand fondly on her shoulder. There was a sympathy between the two which was very touching; they liked to admire together, to praise together. In sorrow or trouble St. Julian looked for his wife, in happiness he instinctively seemed to turn to his favourite daughter.

Hester's charm did not always strike people at first sight. She was like some of those sweet simple tunes which haunt you after you have heard them, or like some of those flowers of which the faint delicate scent only comes to you when you have waited for an instant.

Hexham, for instance, until now had admired Mrs. Beverley infinitely more than he did her sister. He thought Miss St. Julian handsome

certainly, but charmless; whereas the sweet, gentle young mother, whose wistful eyes seemed looking beyond the sunset, and trying in vain to reach the distant world where her husband would presently see it rise, appealed to every manly feeling in his nature. But as the father and daughter turned to each other, something in the girl's face—a dim reflex light from the pure bright soul within—seemed to touch him, to disclose a something, I cannot tell you what. It seemed to Hexham as if the scales had fallen suddenly from his eyes, and as if in that instant Hester was revealed to him. She moved on a little way with two of the children who had joined her. The young man followed her with his eyes, and almost started when some one spoke to him. . .

As St. Julian walked on, he began mechanically to turn over possible effects and combinations in his mind. The great colourist understood better than any other, how to lay his colours, luminous, harmonious, shining with the real light of nature, for they were in conformity to her laws; and suddenly he spoke, turning to Hexham, who was a photographer, as I have said, and who indeed was now travelling in a gipsy fashion, in search of subjects for his camera.

"In many things," he said, "my art can equal yours, but how helpless we both are when we look at such scenes as these. It makes me sometimes mad to think that I am only a man with oil-pots attempting to reproduce such wonders."

"Fortunately they will reproduce themselves whether you succeed or not," said the tutor. St. Julian looked at him with his bright eyes. The old man had spoken quite simply. He did not mean to be rude,—and the painter was silent.

"My art is 'a game half of skill, half of chance,'" said Hexham. "When both these divinities favour me I shall begin to think myself repaid for the time and the money and the chemicals I have wasted."

"Have you ever tried to photograph figures in a full blaze of light?" Lord Ulleskelf asked, looking at Mona and his own little girl standing with Hester, and shading their eyes from a bright stream that was playing like a halo about their heads. There was something unconscious and lovely in the little group, with their white draperies and flowing locks. A bunch of illumined berries and trailing creepers hung from little Lady Millicent's hair: the light of youth and of life, the sweet wondering eyes, all went to make a more beautiful picture than graces or models could ever attain to. St. Julian looked and smiled with Lord Ulleskelf.

Hexham answered, a little distractedly, that he should like to show Lord Ulleskelf the attempt he had once made. "Nature is a very uncertain sort of assistant," he added; "and I, too, might exclaim, 'Oh, that I am but a man, with a bit of yellow paper across my window, and a row of bottles on a shelf, trying to evoke life from the film upon my glass!'" . . .

"I think you are all of you talking very profanely," said Lord Ulleskelf, "before all these children, and in such a sight as this. But

I shall be very glad to come down and look at your photographs, Mr. Hexham, to-morrow morning," he added, fearing the young man might be hurt by his tone.

The firebrand in the still rippled sea turned from flame to silver as the light changed and ebbed. The light on the sea seemed dimmer, but then the land caught fire in turn, and trees and downs and distant roof-tops blazed in this great illumination, and the shadows fell black upon the turf.

Here Mrs. William began saying in a plaintive tone of voice that she was tired, and I offered to go back with her. Everybody indeed was on the move, but we two took a shorter cut, while the others went home with the Ulleskelfs, turning down by a turn of the down towards the lane that leads to Ulles Hall.

And so, having climbed up with some toil and effort to that beautiful height, we all began to descend once more into the everyday of life, and turn from glowing seas and calm sailing clouds to the thought of cutlets and chickens. The girls had taken back their scarves and were running down hill. Aileen was carrying one of Margaret's children, Emilia Beverley had her little Bevis in her arms, Hester was holding by her father's arm as they came back rather silent, but satisfied and happy. The sounds from the village below began to reach us, and the lights in the cottages and houses to twinkle; the cliffs rose higher and higher as we descended our different ways. The old beacon stood out black against the ruddy sky: a moon began to hang in the high faint heaven, and a bright star to pierce through the daylight.

Ulles Hall stands on the way from Tarmouth to the Lodges: it is a lovely old house standing among woods in a hollow, and blown by sea-breezes that come through pine-stems and sweet green glades, starred with primroses in spring, and sprinkled with russet leaves in autumn. The Lodges where St. Julian lives are built a mile nearer to the sea. Houses built on the roadside, but inclosed by tall banks and hedges, and with long green gardens running to the down. They have been built piece by piece. It would be difficult to describe them: a gable here, a wooden gallery thatched, a window twinkling in a bed of ivy, hanging creepers, clematis and loveliest Virginian sprays reddening and drinking in the western light and reflecting it undimmed in their beautiful scarlet veins—scarlet gold melting into green: one of the rooms streams with light like light through stained windows of a church.*

* A little child passing by in the road looked up one day at the Lodges, and said, "Oh, what pretty leaf houses! Oh, mother, do let us live there. I think the robins must have made them." "I think that is where we are going to, Mona," said the mother. She was a poor young widowed cousin of St. Julian's. She came for a time, but they took her in and never let her go again out of the leaf house. She stayed and became a sort of friend, chaperone, governess, and housekeeper; and to these kind and tender friends and relations, if she were to attempt to set down here all that she owes to them, to their warm, cordial hearts, and bright, sweet natures, it would make a story apart from the one she has in her mind to write to-day.

IV.

As I reached the door with Mrs. William, I saw a bustle of some sort, a fly, some boxes, a man, a maid, a tall lady of about seven or eight and twenty, dressed in the very height of fashion, with a very tall hat and feather, whom I guessed at once to be Lady Jane. Mrs. William, who has not the good manners of the rest of the family, shrunk back a little, saying,—“I really cannot face her: it's that Lady Jane;” but at that moment Lady Jane, who was talking in a loud querulous tone, suddenly ceased, and turned round.

“Here is Mrs. St. Julian,” said the fly-man, and my dear mistress came out into the garden to receive her guest.

“I am so glad you have come,” I heard her say quietly; “we had given you up,—are you tired? Come in. Let the servant see to your luggage.” She put out her white gentle hand, and I was amused to see Lady Jane's undisguised look of surprise: she had expected to meet with some bustling, good-humoured housekeeper. Bevis had always praised his mother-in-law to her, but Lady Jane had a way of not always listening to what people said, as she rambled on in her own fashion; and now, having fully made up her mind as to the sort of person Mrs. St. Julian would be, Lady Jane felt slightly aggrieved at her utter dissimilarity to her preconceptions. She followed her into the house, with her high hat stuck upon the top of her tall head, walking in a slightly defiant manner.

“I thought Emilia would have been here to receive me,” said Lady Jane, not over pleased.

“I sent her out,” the mother said. “I thought you would let me be your hostess for an hour. Will you come up into my room?”

Mrs. St. Julian led the way into the drawing-room, where Lady Jane sank down into a chair, crossing her top-boots and shaking out her skirts.

“I am afraid there was a mistake about meeting you,” said the hostess; “the carriage went, but only brought back Mr. Hexham and a message that you were not there.”

“I fortunately met a friend on board,” said Lady Jane, hurriedly. “He got me a fly; thank you, it did not signify.”

Lady Jane was not anxious to enter into particulars, and when Mrs. St. Julian went on to ask how it was she had had to wait so long, the young lady abruptly said something about afternoon tea, asked to see her room and to speak to her maid.

“Will you come back to me when you have given your orders?” said Mrs. St. Julian. “My cousin, Mrs. Campbell, will show you the way.”

Lady Jane, with a haughty nod to poor Mrs. Campbell, followed with her high head up the quaint wooden stairs along the gallery, with its odd windows and slits, and china, and ornaments.

“This is your room; I hope you will find it comfortable,” said the housekeeper, opening a door, through which came a flood of light.

"Is that for my maid?" asked Lady Jane, pointing to a large and very comfortably furnished room just opposite to her own door.

"That room is Mr. Hexham's," said Queenie; "your maid's room leads out of your dressing-room." The arrangement seemed obvious, but Lady Jane was not quite in a temper to be pleased.

"Is it comfortable, Pritchard? Shall you be able to work there? I must speak about it if you are not comfortable."

Pritchard was a person who did not like to commit herself. Not that she wished to complain, but she should prefer her ladyship to judge; it was not for her to say. She looked so mysterious that Lady Jane ran up the little winding stair that led to the turret, and found a little white curtained chamber, with a pleasant, bright look-out over land and sea.

"Why, this is a delightful room, Pritchard," said Lady Jane. "I should like it myself; it is most comfortable."

"Yes, my lady, I thought it was highly comfortable," said Pritchard; "but it was not for me to venture to say so."

Lady Jane was a little afraid of Mrs. St. Julian's questionings. To tell the truth, she felt that she had been somewhat imprudent; and though she was a person of mature age and independence, yet she was not willing to resign entirely all pretensions to youthful dependence, and she was determined if possible not to mention Sigourney's name to her entertainers. Having frizzed up her curling red locks, with Mrs. Pritchard's assistance, shaken out her short skirts, added a few more bracelets, tied on a coroneted locket, and girded in her tight silver waistband, she prepared to return to her hostess and her tea. She felt excessively ill-used by Emilia's absence, but, as I have said, dared not complain for fear of more questions as to the cause of her delay.

All along the passage were more odds and ends, paintings, pictures, sketches framed, a cabinet or two full of china. Lady Jane was too much used to the ways of the world to mistake the real merit of this heterogeneous collection; but she supposed that the artists made the things up, or perhaps sold them again to advantage, and that there was some meaning which would be presently explained for it all. What most impressed Lady Jane with a feeling of respect for the inhabitants of the house was a huge Scotch sheep-dog, who came slowly down the gallery to meet her, and then passed on with a snuff and a wag of his tail.

The door of the mistress's room, as it was called, was open; and as Lady Jane followed her conductress in, she found a second five-o'clock tea and a table spread with rolls and country butter and home-made cake. A stream of western light was flowing through the room and out into the gallery beyond, where the old majolica plates flashed in the glitter of its sparkle. The mistress herself was standing with her back turned, looking out through the window across the sea, and trying to compose herself before she asked a question she had very near at heart.

Lady Jane remained waiting, feeling for once a little shy, and not knowing exactly what to do next, for Mrs. Campbell, who was not without

a certain amount of feminine malice, stood meekly until Lady Jane should take the lead. The young lady was not accustomed to deal with inferiors who did not exactly behave as such, and though inwardly indignant, she did not quite know how to resent the indifference with which she considered she was treated. She tossed her head, and at last said, not in the most conciliatory voice, "I suppose I may take some tea, Mrs. St. Julian?" The sight of the sweet pale face turning round at her question softened her tone. Mrs. St. Julian came slowly forward, and began to push a chair with her white feeble hands, evidently so unfit for such work that Jane, who was kind-hearted, sprang forward, lockets, top boots, and all, to prevent her. "You had much better sit down yourself," said she, good-naturedly. "I thought you looked ill just now, though I had never seen you in my life before. Let me pour out the tea."

Mrs. St. Julian softened, too, in the other's unexpected heartiness and kindness. "I had something to say to you. I think it upset me a little. I heard—I feared"—she said, nervously hesitating. "Lady Jane, did you hear from your brother—from Bevis—by the last mail? . . . Emmy does not know the mail is in. . . . I have been a little anxious for her," and Mrs. St. Julian changed colour.

"Certainly I heard," said Lady Jane; "or at least my father did. Bevis wanted some money raised. Why were you so anxious, Mrs. St. Julian?" asked Lady Jane, with a slightly amused look in her face. It was really too absurd to have these people making scenes and alarms when she was perfectly at her ease.

"I am thankful you have heard," said Mrs. St. Julian, with a sudden flush and brightness in her wan face, which made Lady Jane open her eyes in wonder.

"Do you care so much?" said she, a little puzzled. "I am glad that I do not belong to an anxious family. I am very like Bevis, they say; and I know there is nothing that he dislikes so much as a fuss about nothing."

"I know it," said Mrs. St. Julian. "He is very good and kind to bear with my foolish alarms, and I wonder,—could you,—would you too,—forgive me for my foolishness, Lady Jane, if I were to ask you a great favour? Do you think I might see that letter to your father? I cannot tell you what a relief it would be to me. I told you Emilia does not know that the mail is in; and if—if she might learn it by seeing in his own handwriting that Bevis was well, I think it would make all the difference to her, poor child."

There was something in the elder lady's gentle persistence which struck the young one as odd, and yet touching; and although she was much inclined to refuse, from a usual habit of contradiction, she did not know how to do so when it came to the point.

"I'll write to my father," said Lady Jane, with a little laugh. "I have no doubt he will let you see the letter since you wish it so much."

"Thank you, my dear," said Mrs. St. Julian, "and for the good news

you have given me ; and I will now confess to you," she added, smiling, " that I sent Emmy out on purpose that I might have this little talk. Are you rested ? Will you come into the garden with me for a little ? "

Lady Jane was touched by the sweet maternal manner of the elder woman, and followed quite meekly and kindly. As the two ladies were pacing the garden-walk they were joined by the housekeeper and by Mrs. William, with her little dribble of small talk.

Many of the windows of the Lodges were alight. The light from without still painted the creepers, the lights from within were coming and going, and the gleams were falling upon the ivy-leaves here and there. One-half of the place was in shadow, and the western side in daylight still. There was a sweet rush of scent from the sweetbriars and clematis. It seemed to hang in the still evening air. Underneath the hedges, bright-coloured flowers seemed suddenly starting out of the twilight, while above, in the lingering daylight, the red berries sparkled and caught the stray limpid rays. There was a sound of sea-waves washing the not distant beach ; a fisherman or two, and soldiers from the little fort, were strolling along the road, and peering in as they passed the bright little homes. The doors were wide open, and now and then a figure passed—a servant, Mrs. Campbell—who was always coming and going : William, the eldest son, coming out of the house : he had been at work all day.

The walking-party came up so silently that they were there in the garden almost before the others had heard them : a beloved crowd, exclaiming, dispersing again. It was a pretty sight to see the meetings : little Susan running straight to her father, William St. Julian. He adored his little round-eyed daughter, and immediately carried her off in his arms. Little Mona, too, had got hold of her mother's hand, while Lady Jane was admiring Bevis, and being greeted by the rest of the party, and introduced to those whom she did not already know.

" We had quite given you up, dear Jane," said little Emilia, wistfully gazing and trying to see some look of big Bevis in his sister's face. " How I wish I had stayed, but you had mamma."

" We gave you up," said Hester, " when Mr. Hexham came without you . . . "

" I now find I had the honour of travelling with Lady Jane," said Hexham, looking amused, and making a little bow.

Lady Jane turned her back upon Mr. Hexham. She had taken a great dislike to him on board the boat ; she had noticed him looking at her once or twice, and at Captain Sigourney. She found it a very good plan and always turned her back upon people she did not like. It checked any familiarity. It was much better to do so at once, and let them see what their proper place was. If people of a certain position in the world did not keep others in their proper places, there was no knowing what familiarity might not ensue. And then she ran back to little Bevis again, and lifted him up, struggling. For the child had forgotten her, and seemed not much attracted by her appearance.

"Lady Jane Beverley has something military about her," said Hexham to Mrs. Campbell. :

As he spoke a great loud bell began to ring, and with a little chorus of exclamations, the ladies began to disperse to dress for dinner.

"You know your way, Mr. Hexham," said Mrs. Campbell, pointing. "Go through that side-door, and straight up and along the gallery."

Mrs. St. Julian had put her arm into her husband's, and walked a little way with him towards the house.

"Henry," she said, "thank heaven, all is well. Lord Mountmore heard from Bevis by this mail. Lady Jane has promised to show me the letter: she had heard nothing of that dreadful report."

"It was not likely," St. Julian said; "Ulleskelf only saw the paper by chance. I am glad you were so discreet, my dear."

"I should like to paint a picture of them," said Hexham to the housekeeper, looking at them once more before he hurried into the house.

The two were standing at the threshold of their home, Mrs. St. Julian leaning upon her husband's arm: the strong keen-faced man with his bright gallant bearing, and the wife with her soft and feminine looks fixed upon him as she bent anxiously to catch his glance. She was as tall as he was: for St. Julian was a middle-sized man, and Mrs. St. Julian was tall for a woman.

Meanwhile Hexham, who was not familiar with the ways of the house, and who took time at his toilet, ran upstairs, hastily passed his own door, went along a passage, up a staircase, down a staircase. . . . He found himself in the dusky garden again, where the lights were almost put out by this time, though all the flowers were glimmering, and scenting, and awake still. There was a red streak in the sky; all the people had vanished, but turning round he saw—he blinked his eyes at the sight—a white figure standing, visionary, mystical, in the very centre of a bed of tall lilies, in a soft gloom of evening light. Was it a vision? For the first time in his life Hexham felt a little strangely; and as if he could believe in the super-nature which he sometimes had scoffed at, the young man made one step forward and stopped again. "It is I, Mr. Hexham," said a shy clear voice. "I came to find some flowers for Emilia." It was Hester's voice. Surely some kindly providence sets true lovers' way in pleasant places; and all they do and say has a grace of its own which they impart to all inanimate things. The evening, the sweet stillness, the trembling garden hedges, the fields beyond, the sweet girlish tinkle of Hester's voice, made Hexham feel for the first time in his life as if he was standing in a living shrine, and as if he ought to fall down on his knees and worship.

"Can I help you?" he said. "Miss Hester, may I have a flower for my button-hole?"

"There are nothing but big lilies," said the voice.

Our Little War with the Naikras.

ABOUT thirty miles to the north-east of Baroda, the capital of his Highness the Guicowar of Goozerat, in the Presidency of Bombay, lies a district called Narookote. The nominal ruler of this small territory is a petty chief of the name of Jugta, generally called Jugta Barria, the latter being the usual title of head men or patels of villages in that part of the country. This potentate being a drunken and almost imbecile old man, quite incapable of governing his own territory, its management is in the hands of the British authorities of the neighbourhood, in pursuance of an arrangement by which the revenues are shared equally between our Government and Jugta Barria, and the expenses of management fall on the share of the former. The district is bounded on the west by the British district of the Punch Mahals, on the north and east by the Barria and Chota Oodeypore states, the property of tributary chiefs under the general control of the Political Agent in the Rewa Kanta (bank of the Rewa or Nerbudda river), and on the south by the country under the independent rule of the Guicowar. Its chief inhabitants are Colies and Naikras, the former numbering among them almost all the agriculturists, and the latter being for the most part a wild uncivilized race, subsisting chiefly on the produce of timber and firewood cut in the jungles with which the hilly portion of the district is densely covered. The hills run almost in a semicircle from the most north-easterly point westward along the northern boundary, tending from the north-western corner southwards, and thence again eastward almost across the whole breadth of the district. Between the two arms of the semicircle is a tolerably well peopled and cultivated valley, which opens out into the flat country lying along the eastern limits of the district. As the part of the district now mentioned, and the more or less open valley running along the southern flank of the hills from west to east, are the only portions in which the late operations against the rebels were carried on, it will be needless to give any further description of its physical features than to say that it abounds in hills and dense jungles, capable of affording hiding-places for any number of people knowing them, and wishing to carry on a guerilla warfare.

In a village in this district of the name of Dandispora, there lived a noted old rebel of the name of Roopsing. By caste a Naikra, and, though utterly uneducated, a man of considerable natural ability, shrewdness and tact, Roopsing, although not possessed of any hereditary claim to such distinction, had come to be regarded in the light of the chief of the tribe, whose habitat is confined to an area of a few square miles only

beyond the Narookote district. Several times out in open rebellion before the British acquired a permanent footing in the neighbourhood, his last venture in 1857-58, the days of the mutinies, when every one who had any of the rebel element in him did his little best in that line, had been so successful that he led over a thousand troops a game of hide-and-seek after him in his native wilds for above six months, whilst he amused himself with making sudden raids upon unprotected villages and making off with the plunder. The little war on that occasion was only brought to a conclusion by Roop Singh surrendering himself on the offer of a pardon and promising to lead a quiet life. How he did not keep that promise, but ventured once more on another little war, for which he has since paid forfeit with his life, we have now to tell.

About last November a Naikra living in one of the villages of the Narookote district, of which the name has escaped our memory, began to acquire notoriety as a Bhuggut, or holy personage. His own story, given after his capture, was that he had been as other Naikras were until one day he happened to fall asleep on the summit of a hill. There he was visited by two hill deer, who entered into conversation with him, and informed him that he was invulnerable, and possessed the power of working miracles. Whether he ever actually believed in himself has not been clearly made out, but at all events he acted as if he did, and in a short time acquired a great reputation for sanctity, which was the prime cause of the events about to be related. Such a reputation is easily established among a totally uneducated and superstitious people, and for the most part requires little more than cool assurance and the assumption of a peculiar costume, or rather absence of costume, with a liberal supply of red paint with which to ornament the face and arms, and cowdung ashes to besmear the remainder of the person. Before long, not only the people of his own village and caste came to fall at his feet, but also other Hindoos of established and orthodox sects. Joria, for such was his name, soon gave himself out as Purumeshwur, the Supreme Lord, and held a pantheistical court, of which the inferior deities, such as Hunooman, and attendant demons in the shape of Rakshas, were created by himself, and took care to establish his position by the practice of our familiar adage, "Familiarity breeds contempt," in keeping himself aloof from the common world, and making the privilege of seeing and approaching his holy person one to be paid for by the presentation of fees in hard cash, after a proper amount of dallying and ceremony to show that their acceptance was a matter of peculiar favour and privilege. We recollect a neighbouring Thakore, or petty chief, relating to us with ineffable disgust, after the bubble of Joria's sanctity had burst, how he had had to follow in his train from village to village for days as a humble suppliant before he was vouchsafed the honour of being pronounced pure enough to come into the actual presence and worship the supposed deity. By such means as these Joria had, in the course of two or three months, so far established his reputation in Narookote, and particularly among the people of his own

caste, that numbers of sick were brought to him to be cured of their ailments. No cases in which he had effected cures were ever brought forward, as of course none were forthcoming, but the impostor had shrewdness enough always to assign some plausible excuse for failure, and the people's faith in his powers consequently suffered no diminution. Of two of his followers who were killed in one of the affrays he led them into, he had the supreme hardihood to say that they had been merely temporarily deprived of life because they had disobeyed his orders, but would rise again and fight when British troops came against him, and in this even he was believed. But we are anticipating the course of events.

It was not long before Roopsing and the Bhuggut came together. In the first instance, the former probably followed where most of the people of his caste had led the way, and we have no reason for supposing that, however superior to his fellows in general ability, he was less under the influence of superstition than other Naikras. Once met together, they discerned that they could play into each other's hands,—Joria lent the aid of his spiritual support to Roopsing in the acquisition of temporal power, and Roopsing in return acknowledged Joria's spiritual authority, and assisted him by his countenance in maintaining that priestly, or rather supposedly divine, dignity which brought funds into the common exchequer. The Bhuggut announced to Roopsing that the Naikra Raj (Government) had set in, and that he was to be the ruler, promising him and his followers the protection of his almighty power to shield them from all personal harm. Wurek, a village which we shall have occasion to describe more particularly hereafter, was chosen as the royal residence, and the kingly and divine court established together, Roopsing proceeding to levy transit duties on carts laden with merchandise and timber passing through the district—a chief source of revenue among a people who pay little or no land-tax, and Joria collecting his priestly dues in the form of offerings of money and valuable clothes all the more readily for Roopsing's influence with the people. The sum got together in one way or another must have been considerable, but what became of it nobody was able exactly to make out, for in the days of their misfortune each denied all knowledge of it, and cast the blame of appropriating it to his own purposes on the other. Roopsing, however, was so far under the Bhuggut's influence that he permitted his two little daughters to be appointed Gopees—answering to the female attendants of the amorous god Krishna—to the pretended deity Joria; and it may be concluded from this that the latter had as great a command over the funds as he found necessary for his own ends. The moral code enunciated by the Bhuggut was exemplary. His followers were not to steal, nor do personal violence to any one under ordinary circumstances, but—and this point of the morality inculcated was probably traceable to Roopsing—they were to smite when he directed them to do so.

It was not until February last that the pair proceeded to take any

stronger measures to assert their powers. At the commencement of that month, or in the end of January, Roopsing revived a claim which had been previously rejected, to the payment of blackmail from the Thanna of Rajghur, a small revenue and police station in the south of the Barria State, bordering on Narookote. It was rejected. A few days afterwards Roopsing collected a body of Naikras and went to Rajghur, accompanied by the Bhuggut, and by his own two sons, his wuzoor or prime minister, and others. The Naikras were left outside the post, a mere inclosure of split bamboos, together with the Bhuggut, whom the garrison of Mekranees and the people of the village were invited to look at as being a holy personage, while Roopsing, with his sons and minister, went inside and sat down opposite the Thandar, the head officer of the station, and some of his subordinates. Having by this stratagem got the guard outside without their arms, Roopsing apparently entered into an amicable conversation with the officials, which turned on the pretensions and power of the Bhuggut. In the course of this one of the officials, in a jesting tone, held out his closed hand, and inquired whether the divinity could tell him what was in it. In a moment Gullalia, Roopsing's eldest son, had drawn his sword, and exclaiming, "There is death in it," cut him down. Everything was of course confusion. The Thandar and others escaped through the windows, or in any way they could, followed by the Mekranee guard, who, not having their arms, were helpless. The Naikras, who had till then remained outside, swarmed in: the treasure-chest, supposed to have contained some 1,200 or 1,500 rupees, was broken open and robbed, and the whole place ransacked. After this Roopsing and his party, having first, however, cruelly murdered an old woman, the mother of the slaughtered official, who had unwisely ventured to upbraid them with the murder of her son, went off, doing, it is believed, no harm to the inhabitants of the village. Their success on this occasion naturally raised the reputation of the Bhuggut, to whose power it was attributed; and Roopsing, knowing that the die was cast, and that he would be called to account by the Political Agent in charge of the Barria State and the British authorities of the Punch Mahals, under whom the Narookote district was managed, determined to try his fortune once more and to go regularly out, as the saying is, that is, to go into open rebellion. His next step was to attack the outpost of Jambooghora, in Narookote, where were stationed a Thandar under the orders of the Agent for the Governor in charge of the Punch Mahals, a party of fifteen men of the Goozerat Bheel Corps, and a writer and a few of the ordinary peons attendant on an official of the rank of the Thandar—one intrusted with the collection of the revenue of the district, and having jurisdiction as a magistrate in petty criminal cases. Jambooghora lies in the open country, about a mile to the east of the southern arm of the semicircle of hills described above. The station consisted of an office, with lines for the accommodation of the sepoy, and a few detached sheds for the peons and others connected with the office. They were unsubstantial buildings, constructed with mud and

split bamboo walls, and tiled roofs, partly inclosed by a fence of bamboos. These stood at the end of a double row of about thirty or forty houses, which formed the village, and in which lived artisans and shopkeepers of various descriptions.

One morning a few days after the plunder of Rajghur, Roopsing sent word to Jambooghora that he was coming, and they had better be prepared. The very impertinence of this message very probably had the desired effect of intimidation on the superstitious minds of the Bheels who composed the majority of the armed men of the post, and who of course had heard of the supposed supernatural powers of the Bhuggut and of the affair at Rajghur. About three o'clock on that same afternoon the Naikras were seen to be approaching, preceded by three men armed with bows and arrows and swords. These were men whom the Bhuggut had consecrated as his jodhas or celestial warriors, and who were declared invulnerable. As they came on they commenced by shooting arrows, but in a short time took up their swords, which they had laid on the ground at their feet, saluting them reverentially. With the exception of the usual dhotie, or cloth round the waist and loins, their bodies were bare, but, in common with their faces, liberally besmeared with vermilion paint, the holy colour. As they came on, the Native officer commanding the post hurriedly ordered the men to fall in, and drawn up in no very steady line opposite an opening in the fence by which the enemy were approaching, they fired a volley at the three warriors, from whose bodies they subsequently declared their bullets knocked off the red paint in clouds, but made no further impression. By this time the three were close in upon them, and the Bheels divided to the right and left, with every chance, if they fired again, of firing into each other. Left and right the warriors cut, wounding several, and *saute qui peut* became at once the order of the day with all but one plucky Hindoostan man, a naek or corporal in the Bheel Corps. This man fired his musket with the others, and, seeing the turn affairs were taking, stepped on one side to reload, but was cut down by one of the warriors, who had run round behind him, and killed. A horseman, who happened to have arrived at the outpost on duty that day, and had his horse tied up to one of the posts of the verandah of the Thandar's office at the time, was in such a hurry to get off that he did not wait to unloose his beast, but jumped on his back as he stood, and asked another man, who had his wits about him, to cut the halter. Another horseman stationed there was surrounded and killed. The Thandar hid himself under some rubbish in a shed until the coast was clear. In short, the whole of the Government servants at the station, consisting altogether of thirty-three men, all more or less armed, and out of these a Native officer and fifteen trained men of the Bheel Corps, armed with carbines and sword-bayonets, were overpowered by three fanatics. The fate of the records in the place may be imagined: they were torn into shreds and thrown down the nearest wells, the boxes in which they had been kept being broken to pieces. The shopkeepers in

the village having taken to the surrounding fields and jungle at the first alarm, the Naikras on that day ransacked their houses for treasure and valuables, and on the following one returned with carts, and carried away all the grain and estates they could lay hands on to their head-quarters at Wurek. A more complete destruction of everything, with the exception of the houses themselves, or one more particularly to the liking of the Naikras, who were generally deeply in the books of the grain-dealers, it would have been difficult to accomplish. The state of the place when the force re-occupied it subsequently bore witness to the thoroughness of the work, and until then the vultures and jackals held undisputed sway in the once busy and flourishing village. The corpses of the slaughtered men lay as they fell, and the deep silence of death lay heavy on the devoted spot, which now for the third time within the memory of the present generation had fallen under the Naikras' vengeance. News of the affair at Rajghur reached the European officers in charge of the Punch Mahals, and the Political Agent of the Myhee Kanta, who happened at the moment to be in distant parts of the country, only when Jambooghora was threatened; and before they could reach the neighbourhood of the disturbance not only had that place fallen, but a neighbouring station within the limits of the territory of the Raja of Chota Oodeypore, at a village called Jetpore, had been attacked, the Raja himself fleeing for his life. This attack, however, proved the turning-point of the Naikras' fortune, for two of their band were shot by the Raja's men, and the Bhuggut's reputation at once commenced to wane. But he was equal to the occasion. The dead men were carried back to Wurek, to rise again and fight, as already mentioned, when British troops came against them. But all did not believe this, and it was found from the prisoners subsequently examined that as days passed on, and it was evident that the corpses would soon disappear through the natural process of corruption, Joria was more than once asked when the resuscitation was to take place, and had to exercise all his influence and ingenuity in inventing excuses to support his followers' belief in him.

When the news of Roopsing being "out" again reached him, Mr. P., the Agent for the Governor in the Punch Mahals, was, with Captain S. and Lieutenant W., the Superintendent and Assistant-Superintendent of Police, beyond Dohud, a distance of probably eighty miles from Narookote. Hastily marching off with twenty-five men of the Bheel Corps from Dohud, with orders for twenty-five more to follow as soon as possible, these officers started off, without tents, and without any provision for food on the way but the brandy they carried in their pocket-flasks, or for shelter save the rugs they strapped in front of their horses' saddles. By cross-country tracks, many of which were impassable for carts, they pushed on, kept back by nothing but their own and their men's sheer exhaustion, glad to get for their dinner a fowl, which they exhausted all their culinary knowledge in cooking for themselves, and then tore to pieces with their fingers. Liable at any moment to be intercepted

by the Naikras, and to have to defend themselves with twenty-five men against hundreds, they were making directly for Jambooghora when the news of its capture reached them, and convinced them of the uselessness of going into the disturbed country without reinforcements, for which an express messenger had already been sent off to Baroda, the nearest military station. Once on the march, old Hoossein Shah, the inspector of police, with a smile upon his face and imperturbable as ever, came to them and said quietly: "Be prepared; the Naikras are coming." But though that night the three Europeans kept alternate watch at their watch-fire, the enemy came not, and Halole, the head-quarters of one of the five subdivisions of the Punch Mahals, was reached in safety. Thence the future movements for the suppression of the outbreak were directed.

Halole lies about twenty-five miles to the north-east of Baroda, and at about the same distance almost due west of Jambooghora. On the evening of the day on which the requisition for troops arrived, 200 men of the 26th Native Infantry marched from Baroda, under Captain M. and Lieutenant B., and arrived in the morning. By the evening of the 11th of February there were assembled this small force, the three local officers on civil employ, and the Police Commissioner of the Northern Division of the Bombay Presidency, who had heard of the outbreak while on his tour in the neighbourhood, and come to the rendezvous with a few mounted and foot police. There were expected by the next morning 200 of the 6th Native Infantry from Ahmedabad, whence they would reach Baroda by train. It was important that no time should be lost, as the country was in the greatest state of alarm in consequence of the wild rumours of the strength and intentions of the Naikras that had been spread abroad. It was therefore determined to push on a part of the force next morning to Seevrajpoor, about eleven miles from Halole, on the road to Jambooghora, and at the south-western bend of the semicircle of hills described above, leaving a few of the regular troops and some of the Bheel Corps to protect Halole, and sending off a hundred of the 6th, on arrival, to Rajghur to the Political Agent, who had meanwhile come down there, to keep the passes on the north of the hills.

The morning of the 12th of February dawned bright and cold, quite cold enough to make light woollen clothing comfortable; and as the sun rose over the frowning heights of the old hill of Powaghur, about two miles off, all were astir in the little camp, and all were in high spirits, for they knew that the time for action and excitement had arrived. The tents were picturesquely pitched on the high bank of a tank, at one corner of which was a broad flight of stone steps, or ghant, leading down to the water, overtopped by a wide-spreading banian and other trees, beneath whose shade nestled a picturesque little Hindoo temple. The background was formed by the grim dark heights of Powaghur, a mass of black trap rising almost abruptly from the plain to the height of two or three thousand feet, on the very summit of which is a temple, hardly distinguishable from below from the scarp'd rocks on which it stands. Between the town

and the foot of the hill lies the densest jungle, in which the sambur, the nylgæe, the gazelle, and various kinds of small hill-deer, with the wild-boar, the hyena, the jackal, and the tiger and panther, roam, and the trees resound with the shrill bell-like call of the grey partridge, the harsh, discordant cry of the peacock, and the chattering shriek of thousands of small green parrots. The sepoy's little tents (rowtees, as they are called,) were pitched in a field below the tank, and the rows of muskets piled, with the black ammunition-boxes beside them, guarded by sentries pacing smartly up and down to keep themselves warm, added variety to the scene, in which camels were bellowing as they were being laden, bullocks were struggling and hustling each other as their drivers goaded, pushed, pulled and abused them for not submitting their necks calmly to the yoke, and all was apparently inextricable confusion and uproar, until the rowtees were struck, and the scarlet coats at one end of the field and the blue tunics of the Bheels at the other ranged themselves in their ranks and unpiled arms. Then first about a dozen police horsemen in dark blue coats filed round the edge of the tank and stood on the road, forming the advanced guard of the column. These were followed by the Bheels, who started with a shout, headed by their Soobadar Sheersing, burning with ardour to avenge the disgrace that had fallen on the corps at Jambooghora. The lumbering Goozerat carts, with their wicker-work sides, each with its four or six bullocks, took up the next position: in these were the commissariat supplies, tents, and other camp equipage. The European officers, cool and decided, cantered here and there, arranging the ranks, whilst the country-bred horses of their orderlies screamed and reared and kicked as their riders carried orders about, adding to, instead of allaying, the general uproar. The rear was brought up by the 26th, with stout B., who leant, as he always did on the line of march, on his long bamboo staff, walking at their head.

The march once commenced, all went on smoothly, and no adventure happened but the occasional subsidence on the road of a refractory bullock, and the constant delay of the column until he was goaded up again, and his cart resumed its place in the line. The grey partridge whirled up from the bushes at the side of the track,—for except for a few hundred yards outside Halole itself no attempt at a road had ever been made; sounders of pig ran across, the blue bull came to gaze at the unwonted sight, and started off in affright at his long swinging canter, and the monkeys cried "whoop!" as they jumped from tree to tree, and chattered to each other in anger at the disturbance of their "ancient solitary reign." Soon from amidst the clouds of dust peeped out here and there among the trees a fragment of a ruined wall or a dome rent in pieces by the roots of the creepers that had wound themselves in and out of the masonry, or a graceful minaret, solitary in its decay, but with its stonework so beautifully joined together as to have almost defied the efforts of time; whilst all around the meaner dwellings of those who had erected it could only be distinguished by little mounds of ruins from the

natural appearance of the rocky jungle. At the foot of Powaghur, just outside the ruined gateway of Champaneer, there lies a large square tank of an acre or more in extent, approached on all four sides by flights of stone steps, and at one corner of its edge one of those picturesque domed tombs, with its windows formed of pierced stone trellis-work of varied patterns so common in upper Goozerat, the remnants of Mussulman magnificence, when sultans bore independent sway at Ahmedabad. Close beyond commences the outer wall of the ancient city of Champaneer, whose stately mosques and triple row of lofty fortifications, climbing, row within row, up the side of Powaghur, we would fain linger to describe, but that we feel we are halting too long on the march. Suffice it to say, it is a town which once was of great extent and unusual grandeur, but is now almost uninhabited, and has its remains so covered with dense jungle that several attempts to repopulate it by establishing colonies of agriculturists to cultivate the surrounding country have failed in consequence of the unhealthiness of the place. Here was established a small post of twelve men of the Bheel Corps to keep open the communication with Halole. After a short halt, to allow the men to smoke and drink water, the column moved on, and reached without adventure the camping-ground at Seevrajpoor. On the same morning the detachment of the 6th Native Infantry, which had marched out from Baroda during the night, reached Halole under a captain and subaltern: on the 18th the former with one hundred of his men marched to join the Political Agent, and the latter, accompanied by the Commissioner, joined the camp at Seevrajpoor with the remainder. On the previous afternoon word had been sent in by the Native officer in command of the post at Champaneer, that Deepsing, Jugta Barria's son, had arrived there, saying that he had been forced to go with Roopsing but had escaped: the officer had detained him and asked for orders as to what was to be done with him. As it was, to say the least of it, rather strange that a prisoner should have been allowed to escape on his own horse, and with all his arms, the Commissioner and Assistant Superintendent of Police at once rode out with a few horsemen and brought him into camp at Halole in a sort of honourable captivity.

On the 18th February, then, all the immediately available force had assembled at Seevrajpoor: it included, besides those already mentioned, a hundred Arabs, armed with matchlocks, sent out by the Guicowar under their own leaders, and twenty-five Mekanees, similarly armed, under an old jemadar of the name of Goolab, who played a not inconspicuous part in the subsequent operations. To add to these were about a hundred of his Highness's horse contingent, armed in all kinds of fashions and without uniform of any description, who were useful in carrying post and escorting convoys of provisions, but not trusted in anything of more importance. On that afternoon, as most of the camp were enjoying their siesta, a little commotion became apparent, and half a score of Arabs, in an excited state, were seen bringing forward out of the jungle, which approached to within gunshot-

shot of the camp, three men, whose faces were conspicuously marked with vermilion paint, unarmed, but that each held in his hand a bamboo stick with small pieces of iron fastened to the end of it, so as to jingle when shaken, after the manner of religious mendicants. One of them held out a paper, which, when examined, proved to be covered with all kinds of scrawls, some in zigzag lines, and some in parallel strokes, interspersed with crossed swords and figures of corpses lying stretched out in various positions. On being asked who they were, and why they had come, he that held the paper, and who, it was afterwards discovered, had been one of the three fighters at Jambooghora, replied without hesitation that they had been sent by Roopsing and the Bhuggut to ask our intentions, and that their message was,—they were ready to do whatever we wished: they would come to us, or we might go and fight them. It was pretty evident that the paper and the message were a blind: that they had merely come to see the strength and position of the force, and would have carried back news which might have led to an attack. The Arabs, however, had got behind and surrounded them before they were aware of it, and the paper was produced when they found they were in danger. The end of their venture for them was that they were made prisoners on the spot. An important piece of information was, however, obtained from them, to the effect that the Naikras, with Roopsing and the Bhuggut, were at Wurek, and had no intention of leaving it, and this determined the plan of operations for the force. On previous occasions their tactics had been never to show themselves in the open field, but to trust to sudden night attacks on small detachments in unexpected places, and thus to weary out the troops by keeping them constantly on the alert. If these tactics were to be resorted to again, it would be necessary to take post with detachments on all sides of the hills, to prevent their issuing from them on marauding expeditions in any considerable numbers without being perceived and followed up; and until their apparent determination to stand had been ascertained from the envoys, this was the plan of operations thought of—a plan, however, which would have required a far larger body of troops to carry it out than those then assembled. Now that their infatuation seemed to have reached a pitch sufficiently high to induce them to stand and await the arrival of the troops, immediate action was of course the true policy, and the only thing to be feared was that their ardour should cool before they could be reached. At all events, by a forward movement on Jambooghora, the loss of which had necessarily told terribly against the prestige of the British name, our honour would be restored, and the whole of the southern flank of the hills would be secured by its reoccupation in conjunction with that of Seevrajpoor. It was accordingly determined to recapture Jambooghora the next morning, leaving fifty of the 6th Native Infantry and Goolab's Mahranees to hold Seevrajpoor, and keep open the communication between the main body and Hialeh and Chantpaneer. As the road, however, was difficult, it was deemed advisable not to let the news transpire; and nothing was allowed to

pass beyond the European officers and Goolab and Hoossein Shah, but that the Commissioner's servants were directed to have a cold breakfast prepared and packed by daybreak.

The order of march was pretty much the same as in starting from Halole, except that the Arabs had now joined the force, and that for some considerable distance, as long as the hills came down close to the track, and the jungle was thick, flanking parties of infantry marched along on each side. In the last campaign, the Naikras had known their advantage and attacked the column en route. In some places the spurs of the hills on both flanks came down to the very edge of the track, and the cover was so dense, that the arrows of the Naikras, themselves unseen, could have searched it through and through; but the march was unmolested, and by noon the camp was pitched at Jambooghora. As long as an attack had appeared possible, the European officers, with the exception of the commanding officer, M., had marched on foot, with rifles loaded, and everything ready for bush-fighting, if necessary; but at the end most mounted their horses and cantered on into Jambooghora, only to witness the scene of desolation already described.

On such occasions it is an easy matter to get up an excitement. The Commissioner had dismounted and was walking about the village with Hoossein Shah, quietly looking at the ransacked houses. Two or three inhabitants of the neighbouring village, evidently unconscious of the arrival of the troops, were seen coming towards the place, but on being beckoned to by the Commissioner, took to their heels. Wishing to ascertain who they were, and what was the reason of their running off, he asked if there was a police horseman at hand who could ride after and bring the men in. Immediately the cry of "Horsemen, horsemen!" was taken up and passed on to the camp, a few hundred yards off: a score of men came galloping up with carbines unslung and ready for action. In vain did he stand in the road with both hands raised to stop them. On they swept, one of them, he who had figured in so unenviable a position at the attack on the place, actually firing his pistol into a clump of bamboos, under the vain idea that they contained Naikras, until they found there was no enemy to fight with. This was the second time that a false alarm had been raised: the third time, a few nights afterwards, every man in camp stood to his arms in his proper place in silence, and not a word would have told the enemy, if they had come, what was prepared for their reception.

The next morning, Sunday, 16th February, Wurek was attacked; but in order to preserve the strict chronological order of events it is necessary to describe what took place at Seevrajpoor on the previous night. It was on this very spot that in the last outbreak the Naikras had defeated some irregular levies with considerable loss, and, probably thinking that the force in marching on to Jambooghora had only left Goolab and his Mekranees behind, they now determined on a night attack on the position, which was in reality no more than a bivouac under some large trees. On

the arrival of the troops, the brushwood had been cut down all round up to the distance of an arrow-shot, so that no cover was left in which the Naikras could come to within fifty yards of the nearest tree. Goolab and Sheikh Sooltan, the subadar in command of the party of the 6th, had heard in the afternoon from a horseman of the Guicowar's contingent, who had attempted to carry letters to Jambooghora, that the road had been seized upon after the troops had passed, and were therefore prepared. The carts that had been left behind by the main column were drawn up in a line across the path in the direction in which it was probable any attack made would come, serving as a barricade behind which the Mekranees could stand and deliver their fire, and the two commanders wisely determined not to occupy a shed at one end of the position, which was surrounded by a bamboo fence, and generally occupied by a small post of police, as they had been instructed to do in case of attack, but to trust to their improvised fortress behind the carts. Had they gone into the shed they could not effectually have used their own arms, and the balls from the few matchlocks the Naikras were found to have would have riddled its bamboo walls through and through.

At dusk that evening the Naikras poured out of the jungle on the Jambooghora road, and with loud shouts of "Rama, Rama, Rama!" came on, shooting arrows, preceded by a man flourishing a sword over his head, and dancing like a maniac. But this time there was no panic. The regulars fired into them as they came, and the Mekranees coolly plied their weapons, resting their matchlocks on the carts. The wild children of the forest withered under the scorching fire, and withdrew into the jungle. Again, however, and again, twice in the course of the night, they came on in the same way, urged on by unseen chiefs, and led by the frantic swordsman, whom Sheikh Sooltan at last desisted from firing at, as his life seemed charmed, and it was apparently impossible to hit him. They never attempted to charge home, but each time stood their ground until they found the shots telling around them, and then retreated into the jungle. It was not till the moon rose at about three o'clock in the morning that they finally retired, as was subsequently discovered, to Wurek, by jungly paths over the hills, and were in time to take part in the defence of the place when attacked.

Soon after sunrise the bugles at Jambooghora sounded the march. The country up to the foot of the hills, in a hollow of which the village was situated, was open, but intersected with shallow dry watercourses, and had here and there clumps of bamboos and low jungle. On the march, therefore, although the horsemen moved in advance, the precaution of throwing out flanking parties was taken, to prevent the possibility of surprise from men lying in ambush. Arriving at the foot of the hills, the officer in command found that the track to the village wound close to the foot of a hillock some eighty or one hundred feet high, the lower part of which was clothed with jungle thick enough to afford cover to men

lying concealed, the upper being open enough to show that the enemy had not taken possession of it. A path leading between this hillock and the main hill immediately behind it was pointed out as one by which it was possible the Naikras might escape, and was accordingly ordered to be occupied by a small party of the regulars under a Native officer, while another under the subaltern of the 6th were sent up and crowned the hillock in front, and with this party about half the Arabs went up.

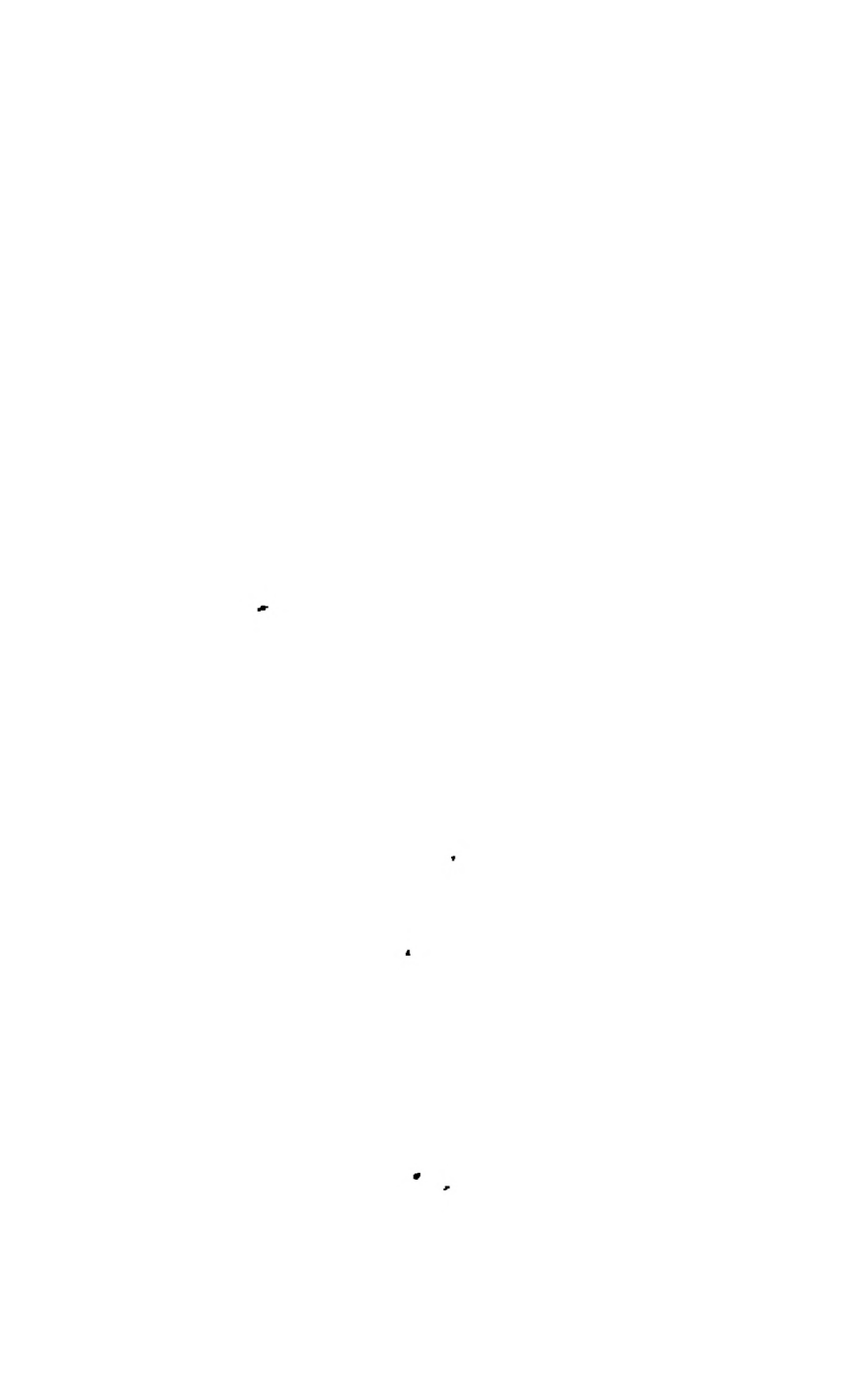
The main body in the meantime wound round the base of the hillock and drew up in line in the valley inside. The officer on the hillock now began to call out that he could see the enemy, but as he could not give any very clear idea of what their numbers or position were, or whether he could hold his own where he was, the Commissioner went up to see the state of matters for himself, and finding that the whole field was tolerably plainly visible thence, asked Captain M. to come up and reconnoitre for himself. This he did, and it was then arranged that the Commissioner should remain on the hillock with the Arabs, while the main body of the troops attacked the village, the huts of which were just visible, with men clustered about them, in front, and if there was no movement to escape in that direction apparent on the part of the enemy, come down and move on the left flank of the troops. These were arranged with the Bheels on the right with Captain S. and Lieutenant W., the regulars in the centre under the two subalterns, and the remainder of the Arabs, with some Mekranees from Oodeypore that had come up early that morning, on the left with Mr. P. and his personal followers. M., with Houssein Shah and the Horse, led the way in front, while the whole line advanced covered by skirmishers. With the Police Horse was a small party of the Poona Horse, the personal escort of the Resident at the Guicowar's court at Baroda, whom the latter had sent out with the field force. As they advanced M. caught sight of a man in yellow clothing, surrounded by men armed with bows and arrows, who was dancing frantically about waving a sword over his head, and immediately gave the order to charge, leading on the horsemen himself. Soon, however, the arrows of the enemy began to fly, and with the exception of Houssein Shah and the Risaldar in command of the small party of the Poona Horse, the commanding officer found himself alone, the other horsemen having fallen back on the advancing infantry. Straight he rode at the man in yellow, then supposed to be the Bhuggut himself, but his faithless regulation sword, thrust full at the man's back, bent double in M.'s hand. Quietly he sheathed his useless weapon, and drew his revolver, but this too failed him at his need, for there was something wrong which prevented it from turning round. All this time the arrows flew thickly around, but fortunately one alone came near its mark and struck on the scrupper of his saddle. Not so well did it fare with the Risaldar of the Poona Horse. One arrow gave him a slight flesh-wound on the hip, a second struck his cartouche-box with such force as to pierce through its tin lining and break a hair-comb he had in it, and the

third struck him sideways on the right breast, and pierced the lung. The gallant soldier reeled in his saddle, and his strong arm fell powerless by his side. Borne back by his now unmanageable horse into a ravine a few yards off, he fell, and in a few minutes breathed his last, supported in the arms of his fellow-troopers. Hoossein Shah, firing his pistol without effect as he came to the front, took to his sword, his little mare,—one that in 1857, when Tantia Topes came upon Dohad, had taken him in to Baroda with the news without a halt, a distance of ninety miles,—carrying him cheerily and safely as the arrows flew thickly around them. When the affair was over, he said quietly, "If one of the dead men is found with a sword-thrust in his left eye, he is mine." And Roopsing's second son was so found.

Meanwhile the infantry had been coming up at the double, both Bheels and regulars, skirmishing. As they came up, M. was seen in pursuit of the man in yellow, the latter dodging amongst the trees, and it was some little time before W. could cover him with his rifle. When at last he did so, he missed him, and at that moment, as if the superstitious dread of the man were again creeping over the troops, the whole line of skirmishers halted and held back. The check was but momentary, however, for S., the never-failing, got his chance, and the man in yellow, with a wild leap in the air, fell flat on his face, never to rise again. Then, with a shout, the line swept on, and all but the main body of the regulars, who were very properly held in hand, opened fire on the flying Naikras. Waiting for one moment, after the firing commenced, to see whether there was any movement in his direction, the Commissioner came down with the Arabs, and calling up the party who had been left to guard the path at the foot of the hillock, swept along the foot of the hills at the back of the village, and joined the line just as M. had thought it prudent not to advance further into the jungle and had halted them. Up the hill, hidden in the thick bushes, the Naikras scrambled, and never appeared together in a body again. In addition to the man in yellow, three other corpses were left on the ground, and numbers of men were subsequently found to have got away wounded. Among these was Roopsing himself, whom a bullet struck in the stomach. On the field, just beyond where the halt sounded, was found a bed-ridden old woman, brought there to be cured by the Bhuggut, attended by another wretched old erone, almost as helpless as herself. The latter was picking up a little grain and a few other things that were lying about, and tying up a little bundle to carry away, which a Bheel sepoy would have snatched from her but for the Commissioner coming up and preventing him. The old woman was found dead on the spot a few days afterwards—for no one afterwards went near the doomed village—which, with the corpses of the men whom the Bhuggut was to have raised from the dead, was burned down after the action. It was thought at the time that the Bhuggut himself had been killed, but he had been wise in his generation. The man in yellow was his devoted disciple, whom he had

persuaded he had gifted with invulnerability, and sent to certain death with clothes that had been rendered sacred by having been worn by the holy man himself.

Subsequent proceedings were confined to the pacification of the country, by assuring the people generally that all who would come in and settle again in their own villages would be unmolested, and the gradual hunting down of Roopsing and the other leaders of the rebellion. The Bhaggut soon gave himself up, and Roopsing, Gullalia, and the Wuzeer—a large reward being offered for their capture, and half-starved in consequence of every village being watched, and almost every place where water was procurable in the hills strictly guarded—in less than a month's time followed his example, no other terms having been offered them but that of a fair trial. This soon followed their capture, and with the sanction of Government the four, and one of the Jodhas, who had been prominent in the attack on Jambooghora, in due time expiated their crimes on the gallows at that place itself. Others had lighter sentences passed upon them, but as it was evident that mere punishment of this description would not permanently settle the country, measures have been taken to induce the immigration of industrious agriculturists from the neighbourhood by the offer of land free of all rent for ten years. It is hoped that this and other liberal measures, and among them not the least that of the gradual education of the people, will soon bring about among them such a change of feeling and habit as to render such an outbreak as that now described impossible in future times.





"ISN'T THAT BOY OF NORCOTT'S GOING IT TO-NIGHT?"

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1868.

That Boy of Norcott's.

CHAPTER VII.

A PRIVATE AUDIENCE.



HAD but reached my room when Eccles followed me to say my father wished to see me at once.

"Come, come, Digby," said Eccles, good-naturedly, "don't be frightened. Even if he should be angry with you, his passion passes soon over; and, if uncontradicted, he is never disposed to bear a grudge long. Go immediately, however, and don't keep him waiting."

I cannot tell with what a sense of abasement I entered my father's dressing-room; for, after all, it was the abject condition of my own mind that weighed me down.

"So, sir," said he, as I closed the door, "this is something I was

not prepared for. You might be forty things, but I certainly did not suspect that a son of mine should be a coward."

Had my father ransacked his whole vocabulary for a term of insult, he could not have found one to pain me like this.

"I am not a coward, sir," said I, reddening till I felt my face in a perfect glow.

"What!" cried he, passionately; "are you going to give me a proof

of courage by daring to outrage *me*? Is it by sending back my words in my teeth you assume to be brave?"

"I ask pardon, sir," said I, humbly, "if I have replied rudely; but you called me by a name that made me forget myself. I hope you will forgive me."

"Sit down there, sir; no, there." And he pointed to a more distant chair. "There are various sorts and shades of cowardice, and I would not have you tarnished with any one of them. The creature whose first thought, and, indeed, only one, in an emergency is his personal safety, and who, till that condition is secured, abstains from all action, is below contempt; him I will not even consider. But next to him—of course with a long interval—comes the fellow who is so afraid of a responsibility that the very thought of it unmans him. How did the fact of my wager come to influence you at all, sir? Why should you have had any thought but for the game you were playing, and how it behoved you to play it? How came I and these gentlemen to stand between you and your real object, if it were not that a craven dread of consequences had got the ascendancy in your mind? If men were to be beset by these calculations, if every fellow carried about him an armour of sophistry like this, he'd have no hand free to wield a weapon, and the world would see neither men who storm a breach nor board an enemy. Till a man can so isolate and concentrate his faculties on what he has to do that all extraneous conditions cease to affect him, he will never be well served by his own powers; and he who is but half served, is only half brave. There are times when the unreasoners are worth all the men of logic, remember that. And now go and sleep over it."

He motioned me to withdraw, but I could not bear to go till he had withdrawn the slur he had cast on me in the word coward. He looked at me steadfastly, but not harshly, for a moment or two, and then said,—

"You are not to think that it is out of regret for a lost sum of money I have read you this lecture. As to the wager itself, I am as well pleased that it ended as it did. These gentlemen are not rich either of them. I can afford the loss. What I cannot afford is the way I lost it."

"But will you not say, sir, that I am no coward?" said I falteringly.

"I will withdraw the word," said he, slowly, "the very first time I shall see you deal with a difficulty without a thought for what it may cost you. There; good-night; leave me now. I mean to have a ride with you in the morning." And he nodded twice, and smiled, and dismissed me.

There was nothing, certainly, very flattering to me in this reception. It cost me dearly while it lasted, and yet—I cannot explain why—I came away with a feeling of affection for my father, and a desire to stand well in his esteem, such as I had not experienced till that moment. It was his utter indifference up to this that had chilled and repelled me. Any show of interest, anything that might evidence that he cared what I was, or what I might become, was so much better than this apathy, that I

welcomed the change with delight. Accustomed to the tender solicitude of a loving mother, no niggard of her praise, and more given to sympathize than blame, the stern reserve of my father's manner had been a terrible reverse, and over and over had I asked myself why he took me from where I was loved and cherished, to live this life of ceremonious observance and cold deference.

To know that he felt even such interest in me as this was to restore me to self-esteem at once. He would not have his son a coward, he said ; and as I felt in my heart that I was not a coward, as I knew I was ready then and there to confront any peril he could propose to me, all that the speech left in my memory was a sense of self-satisfaction.

In each of the letters I had received from my mother she impressed on me how important it was that I should win my father's affection, and now a hope flashed across me that I might do this. I sat down to tell her all that had passed between us ; but somehow in recounting the incident of the billiard-room I wandered away into a description of the house, its splendours and luxury, and of the life of costly pleasure that we were living. "You will ask, dearest mamma," I wrote, "how and when I find time to study amidst all these dissipations ? and I grieve to own that I do very little. Mr. Eccles says he is satisfied with me ; but I fear it is more because I obtrude little on his notice than that I am making any progress. We are still in the same scene of the Adrian that I began with you ; and as to the Greek, we leave it over for Saturdays, and the Saturdays get skipped. I have become a good shot with the rifle ; and George says I have the finest, lightest hand he knows on a horse, and that he'll make me yet a regular steople-chase horseman. I have a passion for riding, and sometimes get four mounts on a day. Indeed, papa takes no interest in the stable, and I give all the orders, and can have a team harnessed for me—which I do—when I am tired with the saddle. They have not quite given up calling me that 'boy of Norcott's ;' only now, when they do so, it is to say how well he rides, and what a taste he shows for driving and shooting.

"Don't be afraid that I am neglecting my music. I play every day, and take singing lessons with an Italian : they call him the Count Guastalla ; but I believe he is the tenor of the opera here, and only teaches me out of compliment to papa. He dines here nearly every day, and plays piquet with papa all the evening.

"There is a very beautiful lady comes here, Mdme. Cleremont. She is the wife of the Secretary to the Legation. She is French, and has such pleasing ways, and is so gay, and so good-natured, and so fond of gratifying me in every way, that I delight in being with her ; and we ride out together constantly, and I am now teaching her to drive the ponies, and she enjoys it just as I used myself. I don't think papa likes her, for he seldom speaks to her, and never takes her in to dinner if there is another lady in the room ; and I suspect she feels this, for she is often very sad. I dislike Mr. Cleremont ; he is always saying snappish things,

and is never happy, no matter how merry we are. But papa seems to like him best of all the people here. Old Captain Hotham and I are great friends, though he's always saying, 'You ought to be at sea, youngster. This sort of life will only make a blackleg of you.' But I can't make out why, because I am very happy and have so much to interest and amuse me, I must become a scamp. M^{de}m^e. Cleremont says, too, it is not true; that papa is bringing me up exactly as he ought, that I will enter life as a gentleman, and not be passing the best years of my existence in learning the habits of the well-bred world. They fight bitterly over this every day; but she always gets the victory, and then kisses me, and says, 'Mon cher petit Digby, I'll not have you spoiled, to please any vulgar prejudice of a tiresome old sea-captain.' This she whispers, for she would not offend him for anything. Dear mamma, how you would love her if you knew her! I believe I'm to go to Rugby to school; but I hope not, for how I shall live like a schoolboy after all this happiness I don't know; and M^{de}m^e. Cleremont says she will never permit it; but she has no influence over papa, and how could she prevent it? Captain Hotham is always saying, 'If Norcott does not send that boy to Harrow, or Rugby, or some of these places, he'll graduate in the Marshalsea—that's a prison—before he's twenty.' I am so glad when a day passes without my being brought up for the subject of a discussion, which papa always ends with, 'After all, I was neither an Etonian nor Rugbeian, and I suspect I can hold my own with most men; and if that boy doesn't belie his breeding, perhaps he may do so too.'

"Nobody likes contradicting papa, especially when he says anything in a certain tone of voice, and whenever he uses this, the conversation turns away to something else.

"I forgot to say, in my last, that your letters always come regularly. They arrive with papa's, and he sends them up to me at once, by his valet, Mons. Durand, who is always so nicely dressed, and has a handsomer watch-chain than papa.

"M^{de}m^e. Cleremont said yesterday, 'I'm so sorry not to know your dear mamma, Digby; but, if I dared, I'd send her so many caresses, *de ma part*.' I said nothing at the time, but I send them now, and am your own loving son,

"DIGBY NORCOTT."

This letter was much longer than it appears here. It filled several sides of note-paper, and occupied me till daybreak. Indeed, I heard the bell ringing for the workmen as I closed it, and shortly after a gentle tap came to my door, and George Spencer, our head groom, entered.

"I saw you at the window, Master Digby," said he, "and I thought I'd step up and tell you not to ride in spurs this morning. Sir Roger wants to see you on May Blossom, and you know she's a hot'un, sir, and don't want the steel. Indeed if she feels the boot, she's as much as a man can do to sit."

"You're a good fellow, George, to think of this," said I. "Do you know where we're going?"

"That's what I was going to tell you, sir. We are going to the Bois de Cambre, and there's two of our men gone on with hurdles, to set them up in the cross alleys of the wood, and we're to come on 'em unawares, you see."

"Then why don't you give me Father Tom or Hungerford?"

"The master wouldn't have either. He said, 'A child of five years old could ride the Irish horse;' and as for Hungerford, he calls him a circus horse."

"But who knows if Blossom will take a fence?"

"I'll warrant she'll go high enough; how she'll come down, and where, is another matter. Only don't you go a-pullin' at her, ride her in the snaffle, and as light as you can. Face her straight at what she's got to go over, and let her choose her own pace."

"I declare I don't see how this is a fair trial of my riding, George. Do you?"

"Well, it is, and it isn't," said he, scratching his head. "You might have a very tidy hand and a nice seat, and not be able to ride the mare; but then, sir, you see, if you have the judgment to manage her coolly, and not rouse her temper too far, if you can bring her to a fence, and make her take off at a proper distance, and fly it, never changing her stride nor baulk, why then he'll see you can ride."

"And if she rushes, or comes with her chest to a bank, or if—as I think she will—she refuses her fence, rears, and falls back, what then?"

"Then I think the mornin's sport will be pretty nigh over," growled he; as though I had suggested something personally offensive to him.

"What time do we go, George?"

"Sir Roger said seven, sir, but that will be eight or half-past. He's to drive over to the wood, and the horses are to meet him there."

"All right. I'll take a short sleep, and be sharp to time."

As he left the room I tore open my letter, to add a few words. I thought I'd say something that, if mischance befell me, might be a comfort to my dear mother to read over and dwell on, but for the life of me I did not know how to do it, without exciting alarm or awakening her to the dread of some impending calamity. Were I to say, I'm off for a ride with papa, it meant nothing; and if I said, I'm going to show him how I can manage a very hot horse, it might keep her in an agony of suspense till I wrote again.

So I merely added, "I intend to write to you very soon again, and hope I may do so within the week." These few commonplace words had a great meaning to my mind, however little they might convey to her I wrote them to; and as I read them over, I stored them with details supplied by imagination—details so full of incident and catastrophe that they made a perfect story. After this I lay down, and slept heavily.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DARK-ROOM PICTURE.

MY next letter to my mother was very short, and ran thus :—

"DEAREST MAMMA,—Don't be shocked at my bad writing, for I had a fall on Tuesday last, and hurt my arm a little ; nothing broken, but bruised, and sore to move, so that I lie on my bed, and read novels. Madame never leaves me, but sits here to put ice on my shoulder and play chess with me. She reads out Balzac for me, and I don't know when I had such a jolly life. It was a rather big hurdle, and the mare took it sideways, and caught her hind leg,—at least they say so,—but we came down together, and she rolled over me. Papa cried out well done, for I did not lose my saddle, and he has given me a gold watch and a seal with the Norcott crest. Every one is so kind ; and Captain Hotham comes up after dinner and tells me all the talk of the table, and we smoke and have our coffee very nicely.

"Papa comes every night before supper and is very good to me. He says that Blossom is now my own, but I must teach her to come cooler to her fences. I can't write more, for my pain comes back when I stir my arm. You shall hear of me constantly, if I cannot write myself.

"Oh, dearest mamma, when papa is kind there is no one like him,—so gentle, so thoughtful, so soft in manner, and so dignified all the while. I wish you could see him as he stood here. A thousand loves from your own boy, Digby."

Madame Cleremont wrote by the same post. I did not see her letter ; but when mamma's answer came I knew it must have been a serious version of my accident, and told how, besides a dislocated shoulder, I had got a broken collar-bone and two ribs fractured. With all this, however, there was no danger to life ; for the doctor said everything had gone luckily, and no internal parts were wounded.

Poor mamma had added a postscript that puzzled madame greatly, and she came and showed it to me, and asked what I thought she could do about it. It was an entreaty that she might be permitted to come and see me. There was a touching humility in the request that almost choked me with emotion as I read it. "I could come and go, unknown and unnoticed," wrote she. "None of Sir Roger's household have ever seen me, and my visit might pass for the devotion of some old follower of the family, and I will promise not to repeat it." She urged her plea in the most beseeching terms, and said that she would submit to any conditions if her prayer were only complied with.

"I really do not know what to do here," said madame to me. "Without your father's concurrence this cannot be done ; and who is to ask him for permission ?"

"Shall I ?"

"No, no, no," cried she, rapidly. "Such a step on your part would be ruin; a certain refusal, and ruin to yourself."

"Could Mr. Eccles do it?"

"He has no influence whatever."

"Has Captain Hotham?"

"Less, if less be possible."

"Mr. Cloremont, then?"

"Ah, yes, he might, and with a better chance of success; but——" she stopped, and though I waited patiently, she did not finish her sentence.

"But what?" asked I at last.

"Gaston hates doing a hazardous thing," said she; and I remarked that her expression changed, and her face assumed a hard, stern look as she spoke: "his theory is, do nothing without three to one in your favour. He says you'll always get these odds, if you only wait."

"But you don't believe that?" cried I, eagerly.

"Sometimes—very seldom, that is, I do not whenever I can help it." There was a long pause now, in which neither of us spoke. At last she said, "I can't aid your mother in this project. She must give it up. There is no saying how your father would resent it."

"And how will you tell her that?" faltered I out.

"I can't tell. I'll try and show her the mischief it might bring upon you; and that now, standing high, as you do, in your father's favour, she would never forgive herself if she were the cause of a change towards you. This consideration will have more weight with her than any that could touch herself personally."

"But it shall not," cried I, passionately. "Nothing in my fortune shall stand between my mother and her love for me."

She bent down and looked at me with an intensity in her stare that I cannot describe; it was as if, by actual steadfastness, she was able to fix me, and read me in my inmost heart.

"From which of your parents, Digby," said she, slowly, "do you derive this nature?"

"I do not know; papa always says I am very like him."

"And do you believe that papa is capable of great self-sacrifice? I mean, Would he let his affections lead him against his interests?"

"That he would! He has told me over and over; the head is as often wrong as right,—the heart only errs about once in five times." She fell on my neck and kissed me as I said this, with a sort of rapturous delight. "Your heart will be always right, dear boy," said she; once more she bent down and kissed me, and then hurried away.

This scene must have worked more powerfully on my nerves than I felt, or was aware of, while it was passing; at all events, it brought back my fever, and before night I was in wild delirium. Of the seven long weeks that followed, with all their alternations, I know nothing. My first consciousness was to know myself, as very weak and propped by pillows,

in a half-darkened room, in which an old nurse-tender sat and mingled her heavy snorings with the ticking of the clock on the chimney. Thus drowsily pondering, with a debilitated brain, I used to fancy that I had passed away into another form of existence, in which no sights or sounds should come but those dreary breathings, and that remorseless ticking that seemed to be spelling out "eternity."

Sometimes one, sometimes two or three persons, would enter the room, approach the bed, and talk together in whispers, and I would languidly lift up my eyes and look at them, and though I thought they were not altogether unknown to me, the attempt at recognition would have been an effort so full of pain, that I would, rather than make it, fall back again into apathy. The first moment of perfect consciousness,—when I could easily follow all that I heard, and remember it afterwards—was one evening, when a faint but delicious air came in through the open window, and the rich fragrance of the garden filled the room. Captain Hotham and the doctor were seated on the balcony smoking and chatting.

"You're sure the tobacco won't be bad for him?" asked Hotham.

"Nothing will be bad or good, now," was the answer. "Effusion has set in."

"Which means, that it's all over—eh?"

"About one in a thousand, perhaps, rub through. My own experience records no instance of recovery."

"And you certainly did not take such a gloomy view of his case at first. You told me that there were no vital parts touched!"

"Neither was there; the ribs had suffered no displacement, and as for a broken clavicle, I've known a fellow get up and finish his race after it. This boy was doing famously. I don't know that I ever saw a case going on better, when some of them here—it's not easy to say whom—sent off for his mother to come and see him. Of course, without Norcott's knowledge. It was a rash thing to do, and not well done either; for when the woman arrived, there was no preparation made, either with the boy or herself, for their meeting; and the result was, that when she crossed the threshold and saw him, she fainted away. The youngster tried to get to her and fainted too: a great hubbub and noise followed; and Norcott himself appeared. The scene that ensued must have been, from what I heard, terrific. He either ordered the woman out of the house, or he dragged her away,—it's not easy to say which,—but it is quite clear that he went absolutely mad with passion: some say that he told them to pack off the boy along with her, but of course this was sheer impossibility; the boy was insensible, and has been so ever since."

"I was at Namur that day, but they told me when I came back that Cleremont's wife had behaved so well; that she had the courage to face Norcott; and though I don't believe she did much by her bravery, she drove him off the field to his own room, and when his wife did leave the

house for the railroad, it was in one of Norcott's carriages, and madame herself accompanied her."

"Is she his wife? that's the question."

"There's not a doubt of it. Blenkworth of the Greys was at the wedding."

"If I were to be examined before a commission of lunacy to-morrow," said the doctor solemnly, "I'd call that man insane."

"And you'd shut him up?"

"I'd shut him up!"

"Then I'm precious glad you are not called on to give an opinion, for you'd shut up the best house in this quarter of Europe."

"And what security have you any moment that he won't make a clean sweep of it, and turn you all into the streets?"

"Yes, that's on the cards any day."

"He must have got through almost everything he had; besides, I never heard his property called six thousand a year, and I'll swear twelve wouldn't pay his way here."

"What does he care! His father and he agreed to cut off the entail; and seeing the sort of marriage he made, he'll not fret much at leaving the boy a beggar."

"But he likes him; if there's anything in the world he cares for, it's that boy!"

The other must have made some gesture of doubt or dissent, for the doctor quickly added, "No, no, I'm right about that. It was only yesterday morning he said to me, with a shake in the voice there's no mistaking, 'If you can come and tell me, doctor, that he's out of danger, I'll give you a thousand pounds.'"

"Egad, I think I'd have done it, even though I might have made a blunder."

"Ye're no a doctor, sir, that's plain;" and in the emotion of the moment he spoke the words with a strong Scotch accent.

There was a silence of some minutes, and Hotham said, "That little Frenchwoman and I have no love lost between us, but I'm glad she cut up so well."

"They're strange natures, there's no denying it. They'll do less from duty and more from impulse than any people in the world, and they're never thoroughly proud of themselves except when they're all wrong."

"That's a neat character for Frenchwomen," said Hotham, laughing.

"I think Norcott will be looking out for his whist by this time," said the other; and they both arose, and passing noiselessly through the room, moved away.

I had enough left me to think over, and I did think over it till I fell asleep.

CHAPTER IX.

MADAME CLEREMONT.

FROM that day forth I received no tidings of my mother. Whether my own letters reached her or not, I could not tell; and though I entreated Madame Cleremont, who was now my confidant in everything, to aid me in learning where my mother was, she declared that the task was beyond her; and at last, as time went over, my anxieties became blunted and my affections dulled. The life I was leading grew to have such a hold upon me, and was so full of its own varied interests, that—with shame I say it—I actually forgot the very existence of her to whom I owed any trace of good, or honest, or truthful, that was in me.

The house in which I was living was a finishing school for every sort of dissipation, and all who frequented it were people who only lived for pleasure. Play of the highest kind went on unceasingly, and large sums were bandied about from hand to hand as carelessly as if all were men of fortune and indifferent to heavy losses.

A splendid mode of living, sumptuous dinners, a great retinue, and perfect liberty to the guests, drew around us that class who, knowing well that they have no other occupation than self-indulgence, throw an air of languid elegance over vice, which your vulgar sinner, who has only intervals of wickedness, knows nothing of; and this, be it said passingly, is, of all sections of society, the most seductive and dangerous to the young: for there are no outrages to taste amongst these people, they violate no decencies, they shock no principles. If they smash the tables of the law, it is in kid-gloves, and with a delicious odour of *Ess bouquet* about them. The Cleremonts lived at the Villa. Cleremont managed the household, and gave the orders for everything. Madame received the company, and did the honours; my father lounging about like an unoccupied guest, and actually amused, as it seemed, by his own unimportance. Hotham had gone to sea; but Eccles remained, in name, as my tutor; but we rarely met, save at meal-times, and his manner to me was almost slavish in subserviency, and with a habit of flattery that, even young as I was, revolted me.

"Isn't that your charge, Eccles?" I once heard an old gentleman ask him; and he replied, "Yes, my lord; but Madame Cleremont has succeeded me. It is *she* is finishing him."

And they both laughed heartily at the joke. There was, however, this much of truth in the speech, that I lived almost entirely in her society. We sang together; she called me *Cherubino*, and taught me all the pages' songs in Mozart or Rossini; and we rode out together, or read or walked in company. Nor was her influence over me such as might effeminate me. On the contrary, it was ever her aim to give me manly tastes and ambitions. She laid great stress on my being a perfect swordsman and a pistol-shot, over and over telling me that a conscious

skill in arms gives a man immenso coolness in every question of difference with other men ; and she would add, " Don't fall into that John Bull blunder of believing that duelling is gone out because they dislike the practice in England. The world is happily larger than the British Islands."

Little sneers like this at England, sarcasms on English prudery, English reserve, or English distrustfulness, were constantly dropping from her, and I grew up to believe that, while genuine sentiment and unselfish devotion lived on one side of the Channel, a decorous hypocrisy had its home on the other.

Now she would contrast the women of Balzac's novels with the colder nonentities of English fiction ; and now, she would dwell on traits of fascination in the sex which our writers either did not know of or were afraid to touch on. " It is entirely the fault of your Englishwomen," she would say, " that the men invariably fall victims to foreign seductions. Circe always sings with a bronchitis in the North ;" and though I but dimly saw what she pointed at then, I lived to perceive her meaning more fully.

As for my father, I saw little of him, but in that little he was always kind and good-natured with me. He would quiz me about my lessons, as though I were the tutor, and Eccles the pupil ; and ask me how he got on with his Aristophanes or his Homer ? He talked to me freely about the people who came to the house, and treated me almost as an equal. All this time he behaved to madamé with a reserve that was perfectly chilling, so that it was the rarest thing in the world for the three of us to be together.

" I don't think you like papa," said I once to her, in an effusion of confidence. " I am sure you don't like him ! "

" And why do you think so ? " asked she, with the faintest imaginable flush on her pale cheek.

While I was puzzling myself what to answer, she said,—

" Come now, Cherubino, what you really meant to say was, I don't think papa likes *you* ! "

Though I never could have made so rude a speech, its truth and force struck me so palpably that I could not answer.

" Well," cried she, with a little laugh, " he is very fond of Monsieur Cleremont, and that ought always to be enough for Madame Cleremont. Do you know, Cherubino, it's the rarest thing in life for a husband and wife to be liked by the same people ? There is in conjugal life some beautiful little ingredient of discord that sets the two partners to the compact at opposite poles, and gives them separate followings. I mustn't distract you with the theory, I only want you to see why liking my husband is sufficient reason for not caring for *me*."

Now, as I liked her exceedingly, and felt something very near to hatred for Monsieur Cleremont, I accepted all she said as incontestable truth. Still I grieved over the fact that papa was not of my own mind, and did not see her and all her fascinations as I did.

There is something indescribably touching in the gentle sadness of certain buoyant bright natures. Like the low notes in a treble voice, there is that that seems to vibrate in our hearts at a most susceptible moment, and with the force of an unforeseen contrast ; and it was thus that, in her graver times, she won over me an ascendancy, and inspired an interest which, had I been other than a mere boy, had certainly been love.

Perhaps I should not have been even conscious, as I was, of this sentiment, if it were not for the indignation I felt at Cleremont's treatment of her. Over and over again my temper was pushed to its last limit by his brutality and coarseness. His tone was a perpetual sneer, and his wife seldom spoke before him without his directing towards her a sarcasm or an impertinence. This was especially remarkable if she uttered any sentiment at all elevated, when his banter would be ushered in with a burst of derisive laughter.

Nothing could be more perfect than the way she bore these trials. There was no assumed martyrdom ; no covert appeal for sympathy ; no air of suffering asking for protection. No ! whether it came as ridicule or rebuke, she accepted it gently and good-humouredly ; trying, when she could, to turn it off with a laugh, or when too grave for that, bearing it with quiet forbearance.

I often wondered why my father did not check these persecutions, for they were such, and very cruel ones too ; but he scarcely seemed to notice them, or if he did it would be by a smile, far more like enjoyment of Cleremont's coarse wit than reprehending or reproving it.

"I wonder how that woman stands it?" I once overheard Hotham say to Eccles ; and the other replied,—

"I don't think she *does* stand it. I mistake her much if she is as forgiving as she looks."

Why do I recall these things ? why do I dwell on incidents and passages which had no actual bearing on my own destiny ? Only because they serve to show the terrible school in which I was brought up ; the mingled dissipation, splendour, indolence, and passion in which my boyhood was passed. Surrounded by men of reckless habits, and women but a mere shade better, life presented itself to me as one series of costly pleasures, dashed only with such disappointments as loss at play inflicted, or some project of intrigue baffled or averted.

"If that boy of Norcott's isn't a scamp, he must be a most unteachable young rascal," said an old colonel once to Eccles on the crôquet ground.

"He has had great opportunities," said Eccles, as he sent off his ball, "and, so far as I see, neglected none of them."

"You were his tutor, I think ?" said the other with a laugh.

"Yes, till Madame Cleremont took my place."

"I'll not say it was the worst thing could have happened him. I wish it had been a woman had spoiled *me*. Eh, Eccles, possibly you may have some such misgivings yourself ?"

"I was never corrupted," said the other, with a sententious gravity whose hypocrisy was palpable.

I meditated many and many a time over these few words, and they suggested to me the first attempt I ever made to know something about myself and my own nature.

Those stories of Balzac's, those wonderful pictures of passionate life, acquired an immense hold upon me, from the very character of my own existence. That terrific game of temper against temper, mind against mind, and heart against heart, of which I read in these novels, I was daily witnessing in what went on around me, and I amused myself by giving the names of the characters in these fictions to the various persons of our society.

"It is a very naughty little world we live in at this house, Digby," said madame to me one day; "but you'd be surprised to find what a very vulgar thing is the life of people in general, and that if you want the sensational, or even the pictorial in existence, you'll have to pay for it in some compromise of principle."

"I know mamma wouldn't like to live here," said I, half sullenly.

"Oh, mamma!" cried she, with a laugh, and then suddenly checking herself: "No, Digby, you are quite right. Mamma would be shocked at our doings; not that they are so very wicked in themselves as that, to one of her quiet ways, they would seem so."

"Mamma is very good. I never knew any one like her," stammered I out.

"That's quite true, my dear boy. She is all that you say, but one may be too good, just as he may be too generous, or too confiding; and it is well to remember that there are a number of excellent things one would like to be if they could afford them; but the truth is, Digby, the most costly of all things are virtues."

"Oh, do not say that!" cried I eagerly.

"Yes, dear, I must say it. Monsieur Cleremont and I have always been very poor, and we never permitted ourselves these luxuries, any more than we kept a great house, and a fine equipage, and so we economize in our morals, as in our means, doing what rich folk might call little shabbinesses; but on the whole managing to live, and not unhappily either."

"And papa?"

"Papa has a fine estate, wants for nothing, and can give himself every good quality he has a fancy for."

"By this theory then, it is only rich people are good?"

"Not exactly. I would rather state it thus—the rich are as good as they like to be; the poor are as good as they're able."

"What do you say then to Mr. Eccles: he's not rich, and I'm sure he's good?"

"Poor Mr. Eccles!" said she with a merry laughter, in which a something scornful mingled, and she hurried away.

CHAPTER X.

PLANNING PLEASURE.

It was my father's pleasure to celebrate my fifteenth birthday with great splendour. The whole house was to be thrown open; and not only the house, but the conservatory and the grounds were to be illuminated. The festivities were to comprise a grand dinner and a reception afterwards, which was to become a ball, as if by an impromptu.

As the society of the Villa habitually was made up of a certain number of intimates, relieved from time to time by such strangers as were presented, and as my father never dined out, or went into the fashionable world of the place, it was somewhat of a bold step at once to invite a number of persons with whom we had no more than bowing acquaintance, and to ask to his table ministers, envoys, court officials, and grand-chamberlains for the first time. It was said, I know not how truthfully, that Cleremont did his utmost to dissuade him from the project at first, by disparaging the people for whom he was putting himself to such cost, and finding this line of no avail, by openly saying that what between the refusals of some, the excuses of others, and the actual absence of many whose presence he was led to expect, my father was storing up for himself an amount of disappointment and outrage that would drive him half desperate. It was not, of course, very easy to convey this to my father. It could only be done by a dropping word, or a half-expressed doubt. And when the time came to make out the lists and issue the invitations, no real step had been taken to turn him from his plan.

The same rumour which ascribed to Cleremont the repute of attempting to dissuade my father from his project, attributed to Madame Cleremont a most eager and warm advocacy of the intended fête. From the marked coldness and reserve, however, which subsisted between my father and her, it was too difficult to imagine in what way her influence could be exercised.

And for my own part, though I heard the list of the company canvassed every day at luncheon, and discussed at dinner, I don't remember an occasion where madame ever uttered a word of remark, or even a suggestion in the matter. Hotham, who had come back on a short leave, was full of the scheme. With all a sailor's love of movement and bustle, he mixed himself up with every detail of it. He wrote to Paris and London for all the delicacies of the "comestible"-shops. He established "estafettes" on every side to bring in fresh flowers and fruit; with his own hands he rigged out tents and marquees for the regimental bands, which were to be stationed in different parts of the grounds; and all the devices of Bengal lights and fireworks he took into his especial charge.

Indeed, Nixon told me that his functions did not stop here, but that he had charged himself with the care of Madame Cleremont's toilette, for whom he had ordered the most splendid ball-dress Paris could produce. "Naturally, Master Digby, it is Sir Roger pays," added he; "and perhaps

one of these days he'll be surprised to find that diamond loops and diamond bouquets should figure in a milliner's bill. But as she is to receive the company, of course it's all right."

"And why does Mr. Cleremont seem to dislike it all so much?" asked I.

"Chiefly, I believe, because *she* likes it." And then, as though he had said more than he intended, he added, "Oh, it's easy to see he likes to keep this house as much his own as he can. He doesn't want Sir Roger to have other people about him. He's almost the master here now; but if your father begins to mix with the world, and have strangers here, Cleremont's reign would soon be over."

Though there was much in this speech to suggest thought and speculation, nothing in it struck me so forcibly as the impertinence of calling Mr. Cleremont, Cleremont, and it was all I could do to suppress the rebuke that was on my lips.

"If your father comes through for a thousand pounds, sir," continued he, "I'll say, he's lucky. If Sir Roger would leave it to one person to give the orders,—I don't mean myself,—though by right it is my business; instead of that, there's the captain sending for this, and Cleremont for the other, and you'll see there will be enough for three entertainments when it's all over. Could you just say a word to him, sir?"

"Not for the world, Nixon. Papa is very kind to me, and good-natured, but I'll not risk any liberty with him; and what's more, I'd be right sorry to call Mr. Cleremont, Cleremont before him, as you have done twice within the last five minutes."

"Lord bless you, Master Digby! I've known him these fifteen years. I knew him when he came out, just a boy like, to Lord Colthorpe's embassy. He and I is like pals."

"You have known *me* also as a boy, Nixon," said I, haughtily; "and yet, I promise you, I'll not permit you to speak of me as Norcott, when I am a man."

"No fear of that, sir, you may depend on't," said he, with humility; but there was a malicious twinkle in his eye, and a firm compression of the lip, as he withdrew, that did not leave my mind the whole day after. Indeed, I recognized that his face had assumed the selfsame look of insolent familiarity it wore when he spoke of Cleremont.

The evening of that day was passed filling up the cards of invitation,—a process which amused me greatly, affording, as it did, a sort of current critique on the persons whose names came up for notice, and certainly, if I were to judge of their eligibility only by what I heard of their characters, I might well feel amazed why they were singled out for attentions. They were marquises and counts, however, chevaliers of various orders, grand cordons and "*hautes charges*," so that their trespasses or their shortcomings had all been enacted in the world of good society, and with each other as accomplices or victims. There were a number of contingencies, too, attached to almost every name. There must be high play for the Russian

envoy, flirting for the French minister's wife, iced drinks for the Americans, and scandal and Ostend oysters for everybody. There was scarcely a good word for any one, and yet the most eager anxiety was expressed that they would all come. Immense precautions had been taken to fix a day when there was nothing going on at court or in the court circle. It was difficult to believe that pleasure could be planned with such heartburning and bitterness. There was scarcely a detail that did not come associated with something that reflected on the morals or the manners of the dear friends we were entreating to honour us; and for the life of me I did not know why such pains were taken to secure the presence of people for whom none had a good wish nor a single kindly thought.

My father took very little part in the discussion; he sat there with a sort of proud indifference, as though the matter had little interest for him, and if a doubt were expressed as to the likelihood of this or that person's acceptance, he would superciliously break in with, "He'll come, sir; I'll answer for that. I have never yet played to empty benches."

This vain and haughty speech dwelt in my mind for many a day, and showed me how my father deemed that it was not his splendid style of living, his exquisite dinners, and his choice wines that drew guests around him, but his own especial qualities as host and entertainer.

"But that it involves the bore of an audience, I'd ask the King; I could give him some Château d'Yquem very unlike his own, and such as, I'll venture to say, he never tasted," said he, affectedly.

"So you are going to bring out the purple seal?" cried Cleremont.

"I might for royalty, sir; but not for such people as I read of in that list there."

"Why, here are two dukes with their duchesses, marquises and counts by the score, half-a-dozen ministers plenipotentiary, and a perfect cloud of chamberlains and court swells."

"They'd cut a great figure, I've no doubt, Hotham, on the quarter-deck of the *Thunder Bomb*, where you eke out the defects of a bad band with a salute from your big guns, and give your guests the national anthem when they want champagne. Oh, dear, there's no snob like a sailor!"

"Well, if they're not good enough for you, why the devil do you ask them?" cried Hotham, sturdily.

"Sir, if I were to put such a question to myself I might shut up my house to-morrow!" And with this very uncourteous speech he arose and left the room.

We continued, however, to fill in the cards of invitation and address the envelopes, but with little inclination to converse, and none whatever to refer to what had passed.

"There," cried Cleremont, as he checked off the list. "That makes very close on seven hundred. I take it I may order supper for six hundred." Then turning half fiercely to me, he added, "Do you know, youngster, that all this tomfoolery is got up for *you*? It is by way of

celebrating your birthday, we're going to turn the house out of the windows!"

"I suppose my father has that right, sir."

"Of course he has, just as he would have the right to make a ruin of the place to-morrow if he liked it; but I don't fancy his friends would be the better pleased with him for his amiable eccentricity: your father pushes our regard for him very far sometimes."

"I'll tell him to be more cautious, sir, in future," said I, moving towards the door.

"Do so," said he. "Good-night."

I had scarcely taken my bedroom candle when I felt a hand on my shoulder: I turned and saw Madame Cleremont standing very pale and in great agitation at my side. "Oh, Digby," said she, "don't make that man your enemy whatever you do; he is more than a match for you, poor child!" She was about to say more when we heard voices in the corridor, and she hurried away and left me.

CHAPTER XI.

'A BIRTHDAY DINNER.

THE eventful day arrived at last, and now, as I write, I can bring up before me the whole of that morning, so full of exciting sensations and of pleasurable surprises. I wandered about from room to room, never satiated with the splendours around me. Till then I had not seen the gorgeous furniture uncovered, nor had I the faintest idea of the beauty and richness of the silk hangings, or the glittering elegance of those lustres of pure Venetian glass. Perhaps nothing, however, astonished me so much as the array of gold and silver plate in the dining-room. Our every-day dinners had been laid out with what had seemed to me a most costly elegance; but what were they to this display of splendid centre-pieces and massive cups and salvers large as shields! Of flowers, the richest and rarest, waggon-loads poured in; and at last I saw the horses taken out, and carts full of carnations and geraniums loft unloaded in the stable-yard. Ice, too, came in the same profusion: those squarely cut blocks, bright as crystal, and hollowed out to serve as wine-coolers, and take their place amidst the costlier splendours of gold and silver.

It is rare to hear the servant class reprove profusion; but here I overheard many a comment on the reckless profligacy of outlay which had provided for this occasion enough for a dozen such. It was easy to see, they said, that Mr. Cleremont did not pay, and this sneer sunk deep into my mind, increasing the dislike I already felt for him.

Nor was it the house alone was thus splendidly prepared for reception; but kiosks and tents were scattered through the grounds, in each of which, as if by magic, supper could be served on the instant. Upwards of

thirty additional servants were engaged, all of whom were dressed in our state livery, white, with silver epaulets, and the Norcott crest embroidered on the arm. These had been duly drilled by Mr. Cleremont, and were not, he said, to be distinguished by the most critical eye from the rest of the household.

Though there was movement everywhere, and everywhere activity, there was little or no confusion. Cleremont was an adept in organization, and already his skill and cleverness had spread discipline through the mass. He was a despot however, would not permit the slightest interference with his functions, nor accept a suggestion from any one. "Captain Hotham gives no orders here," I heard him say; and when standing under my window, and I am almost sure seeing me, he said, "Master Digby has nothing to do with the arrangements any more than yourself."

I had determined that day to let nothing irritate or vex me; that I would give myself up to unmixed enjoyment and make this birthday, a memorable spot in life, to look back on with undiluted delight. I could have been more certain to carry out this resolve if I could only have seen and spoken with Madame Cleremont; but she did not leave her room the whole day. A distinguished hairdresser had arrived with a mysterious box early in the morning, and after passing two hours engaged with her, had returned for more toilet requirements. In fact, from the coming and going of maids and dressmakers, it was evident that the preparations of beauty were fully equal to those that were being made by cooks and confectioners.

My father, too, was invisible; his breakfast was served in his own room; and when Cleremont wished to communicate with him, he had to do so in writing: and these little notes passed unceasingly between them till late in the afternoon.

"What's up now?" I heard Hotham say, as Cleremont tore up a note in pieces and flung the fragments from him with impatience.

"Just like him. I knew exactly how it would be," cried the other. "He sent a card of invitation to the Duc de Bredar without first making a visit; and here comes the Duc's chasseur to say that his Excellency has not the honour of knowing the gentleman who has been so gracious as to ask him to dinner."

"Norcott will have him out for the impertinence," said Hotham.

"And what will that do? Will the shooting him or the being shot make this dinner go off as we meant it, eh? Is that for me, Nixon? give it here." He took a note as he spoke, and tore it open. "*Le Marquis de Carnac is engaged*," not a word more. "The world is certainly progressing in politeness. Three cards came back this day with the words '*Sent by mistake*' written on them. Norcott does not know it yet, nor shall he till to-morrow."

"Is it true that the old Countess de Joieville begged to know who was to receive the ladies invited?"

"Yes, it is true; and I told her a piece of her own early history in return, to assure her that no accident of choice should be any bar to the hope of seeing her."

"What was the story?"

"I'd tell it if that boy of Norcott's was not listening there at that window."

"Yes, sir," cried I; "I have heard every word, and mean to repeat it to my father when I see him."

"Tell him at the same time, then, that his grand dinner of twenty-eight has now come down to seventeen, and I'm not fully sure of three of these."

I went down into the dining-room, and saw that places had been laid for twenty-eight, and as yet no alteration had been made in the table, so that it at once occurred to me this speech of Cleremont's was a mere impertinence—one of those insolent sallies he was so fond of. Nixon, too, had placed the name of each guest on his napkin, and he, at least, had not heard of any apologies.

Given in my honour, as this dinner was, I felt a most intense interest in its success. I was standing, as it were, on the threshold of life, and regarded the mode in which I should be received as an augury of good or evil. My father's supremacy at home, the despotism he wielded, and the respect and deference he exacted, led me to infer that he exercised the same influence on the world at large; and that, as I had often heard, the only complaint against him in society was his exclusiveness. I canvassed those thoughts with myself for hours, as I sat alone in my room waiting till it was time to dress.

At last eight o'clock struck, and I went down into the drawing-room. Hotham was there, in a window recess, conversing in whispers with an Italian count—one of our intimates, but of whom I knew nothing. They took no notice of me, so that I took up a paper and began to read. Cleremont came in soon after with a bundle of notes in his hand. "Has your father come down?" asked he, hastily; and then, without waiting for my reply, he turned and left the room. Madame next appeared. I have no words for my admiration of her as, splendidly dressed and glittering with diamonds, she swept proudly in. That her beauty could have been so heightened by mere toilette seemed incredible, and as she read my wonderment in my face she smiled, and said:—

"Yes, Digby, I am looking my very best to fête your birthday."

I would have liked to have told her how lovely she appeared to me, but I could only blush and gaze wonderingly on her.

"Button this glove, dear," said she, handing to me her wrist all weighted and jingling with costly bracelets; and while, with trembling fingers, I was trying to obey her, my father entered and came towards us. He made her a low but very distant bow, tapped me familiarly on the shoulder, and then moved across to an arm-chair and sat down.

Cleremont now came in, and drawing a chair beside my father's, leaned

over and said something in a whisper. Not seeming to attend to what he was saying, my father snatched rather than took the bundle of letters he held in his hand, ran his eyes eagerly over some of them; and then, crushing the mass in his grasp, he threw it into the fire.

"It is forty minutes past eight," said he, calmly, but with a deadly pallor in his face. "Can any one tell me if that clock be right?"

"It is eight or ten minutes slow," said Hotham.

"Whom do we wait for, Cleremont?" asked my father again.

"Steinmetz was 'do service' with the King, but would come if he got free; and there's Rochegude, the French Secretary, was to replace his chief. I'm not quite sure about the Walronds, but Craydon told me positively to expect *him*."

"Do me the favour to ring the bell and order dinner," said my father, and he spoke with measured calm.

"Won't you wait a few minutes?" whispered Cleremont. "The Duke de Frialmont, I'm sure, will be here."

"No, sir; we live in a society that understands and observes punctuality. No breach of it is accidental. Dinner, Nixon!" added he, as the servant appeared.

The folding doors were thrown wide almost at once, and dinner announced. My father gave his arm to Madame Cleremont, who actually tottered as she walked beside him, and as she sat down seemed on the verge of fainting. Just as we took our places three young men, somewhat over-dressed, entered hurriedly, and were proceeding to make their apologies for being late; but my father with a chilling distance, assured them they were in excellent time, and motioned them to be seated.

Of the table laid for twenty-eight guests, nine places were occupied; and these, by some mischance, were scattered here and there with wide intervals. Madame Cleremont sat on my father's right, and three empty places flanked his left hand.

I sat opposite my father, with two vacant seats on either side of me; Hotham nearest to me, and one of the strangers beside him. They conversed in a very low tone, but short snatches and half sentences reached me; and I heard the stranger say, "It was too bold a step; women are sure to resent such attempts." Madame Cleremont's name, too, came up three or four times; and the stranger said, "It's my first dinner here, and the Bredars will not forgive me for coming."

"Well, there's none of them has such a cook as Norcott," said Hotham.

"I quite agree with you; but I'd put up with a worse dinner for better company."

I looked round at this to show I had heard the remark, and from that time they conversed in a whisper.

My father never uttered a word during the dinner. I do not know if he ate, but he helped himself and affected to eat. As for madame, how

she sat out those long two hours, weak and fainting as she was, I cannot tell. I saw her once try to lift her glass to her lips, but her hand trembled so, she set it down untasted, and lay back in her chair, like one dying out of exhaustion.

A few words and a faint attempt to laugh once or twice broke the dead silence of the entertainment, which proceeded, however, in all its stately detail, course after course, till the dessert was handed round, and Tokay, in small gilt glasses, was served; then my father rose slowly, and drawing himself up to his full height, looked haughtily around him. "May I ask my illustrious friends," said he, "who have this day so graciously honoured me with their presence, to drink the health of my son, whose birthday we celebrate. There is no happier augury on entering life than to possess the friendship and goodwill of those who stand foremost in the world's honour. It is his great privilege to be surrounded this day by beauty and by distinction. The great in the art of peace and war, and that loveliness which surpasses in its fascination all other rewards, are around me, and I call upon these to drink to the health of Digby Norcott."

All rose and drank; Hotham lifted his glass high in air and tried a cheer, but none joined him; his voice died away, and he sat down; and for several minutes an unbroken silence prevailed.

My father at last leaned over towards madame, and I heard the word "coffee." She arose and took his arm, and we all followed them to the drawing-room.

"I'm right glad it's over," said Hotham, as he poured his brandy over his coffee. "I've sat out a court-martial that wasn't slower than that dinner."

"But what's the meaning of it all?" asked another. "Why and how came all these apologies?"

"You'd better ask Cleremont, or rather his wife," muttered Hotham, and moved away.

"You ought to get into the open air: that's the best thing for you," I heard Cleremont say to his wife, but there was such a thorough indifference in the tone, it sounded less like a kindness than a sarcasm. She, however, drew a shawl around her and moved down the steps into the garden. My father soon after retired to his own room, and Cleremont, laughingly, said, "There are no women here, and we may have a cigar;" and he threw his case across the table. The whole party were soon immersed in smoke.

I saw that my presence imposed some restraint on the conversation, and soon sought my room with a much sadder spirit and a heavier heart than I had left it two hours before.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BALL.

Musing, and thinking, and fretting together, I had fallen asleep on my sofa, and was awakened by Mr. Nixon lighting my candles, and asking me, in a very mild voice, if I felt unwell.

"No, nothing of the kind."

"Won't you go down, sir, then? It's past eleven now, and there's a good many people below."

"Who have come?" asked I, eagerly.

"Well, sir," said he, with a certain degree of hesitation, "they're not much to talk about. There's eight or nine young gentlemen of the embassies,—attachés like,—and there's fifteen or twenty officers of the Guides, and there's some more that look like travellers out of the hotels; they ain't in evening-dress."

"Are there no ladies?"

"Yes; I suppose we must call them ladies, sir. There's Mademoiselle Rigault and her two daughters."

"The pastrycook?"

"Yes, sir; and there are the Mesdemoiselles Janson, of the cigar-shop, and stunningly dressed they are, too! Amber satin with black lace, and Spanish veils on their heads. And there's that little Swedish girl—I believe she's a Swede—that sells the iced drinks."

"But what do you mean? These people have not been invited. How have they come here?"

"Well, sir, I mustn't tell you a lie; but I hope you'll not betray me if I speak in confidence to you. Here's how it all has happened. The swells all refused: they agreed together that they'd not come to dinner, nor come in the evening. Mr. Cleremont knows why; but it ain't for me to say it."

"But I don't know, and I desire to know!" cried I haughtily.

"Well, indeed, sir, it's more than I can tell you. There's people here not a bit correcter than herself that won't meet her."

"Meet whom?"

"Madame, sir—Madame Cleremont."

"Don't dare to say another word," cried I, passionately. "If you utter a syllable of disrespect to that name I'll fling you out of the window."

"Don't be afraid, Master Digby, I know my station, and I never forget it, sir. I was only telling you what you asked me, not a word more. The swells sent back your father's cards, and there's more than three hundred of them returned."

"And where's papa now?"

"In bed, sir. He told his valet he wasn't to be disturbed, except the house took fire."

"Is Madame Cleremont below?"

"No, sir; she's very ill. The doctor has been with her, and he's coming again to-night."

"And are these people—this rabble that you talk of—received as my papa's guests?"

"Only in a sort of a way, sir," said he, smiling. "You see, that when Mr. Cleremont perceived that there was nothing but excuses and apologies pouring in, he told me to close the house, and that we'd let all the bourgeois people into the grounds, and give them a jolly supper and plenty of champagne; and he sent word to a many of the young officers to come up and have a lark; and certainly, as the supper was there, they might as well eat it. The only puzzle is now, won't there be too many, for he sent round to all Sir Roger's tradespeople,—all at least that has good-looking daughters,—and they're pourin' in by tens and fifteens, and right well dressed and well got up, too."

"And what will papa say to all this to-morrow?"

"Don't you know, sir, that Sir Roger seldom looks back," said he, with a cunning look; "he'll not be disturbed to-night, for the house is shut up, and the bands are playing, one at the lake, the other at the end of the long walk, and the suppers will be served here and there, where they can cheer and drink toasts without annoying any one."

"It's a downright infamy!" cried I.

"It ain't the correct thing, sure enough, sir, there's none of us could say that, but it will be rare fun; and as Captain Hotham said, 'the women are a precious sight better looking than the countesses.'"

"Where is Mr. Eccles?"

"I saw him waltzing, sir, or maybe it was the polka, with Madamo Robineau just as I was coming up to you."

"I'll go down and tell Mr. Cleremont to dismiss his friends," cried I, boiling over with anger. "Papa meant this fête to celebrate my birthday. I'll not accept such rabble congratulations. If Mr. Cleremont must have an orgie, let him seek for another place to give it in."

"Don't go, master, don't, I entreat you," cried he, imploringly. "You'll only make a row, sir, and bring down Sir Roger, and then who's to say what will happen? He'll have a dozen duels on his hands in half as many minutes. The officers won't stand being called to account, and Sir Roger is not the man to be sweet-tempered with them."

"And am I to see my father's name insulted, and his house dishonoured by such a canaille crew as this?"

"Just come down and see them, Master Digby; prettier, nicer girls you never saw in your life, and pretty behaved, too. Ask Mr. Eccles if he ever mixed with a nicer company. There now, sir, slip on your velvet jacket—it looks nicer than that tail-coat—and come down. They'll be all proud and glad to see you, and won't she hold her head high that you ask to take a turn of a waltz with you!"

"And how should I face my father to-morrow?" said I, blushing deeply.

"Might I tell you a secret, Master Digby?" said he, leaning over the table, and speaking almost in my ear.

"Go on," said I, drily.

"I know well, sir, you'll never throw me over, and what I'm going to tell you is worth gold to you."

"Go on," cried I, for he had ceased to speak.

"Here it is, then," said he, with an effort. "The greatest sorrow your father has, Master Digby, is that he thinks you have no spirit in you—that you're a mollicot. As he said one day to Mr. Cleremont, 'You must teach him everything, he has no "go" in himself: there's nothing in his nature but what somebody else put into it.'"

"He never said that!"

"I pledge you my oath he did."

"Well, if he did, he meant it very differently from what you do."

"There's no two meanings to it. There's a cheer!" cried he, running over to the window and flinging it wide. "I wonder who's come now? Oh, it's the fireworks are beginning."

"I'll go down," said I; but out of what process of reasoning came that resolve I am unable to tell.

"Maybe they won't be glad to see you," cried he, as he helped me on with my jacket and arranged the heron's feathers in my velvet cap. I was half faltering in my resolution, when I bethought me of that charge of feebleness of character Nixon had reported to me, and I determined, come what might, I could show that I had a will and could follow it. In less than five minutes after, I was standing under the trees in the garden shaking hands with scores of people I never saw before, and receiving the very politest of compliments and good wishes from very pretty lips, aided by very expressive eyes.

"Here's Mademoiselle Pauline Delorme refuses to dance with me," cried Eccles, "since she has seen the head of the house. Digby, let me present you." And with this he led me up to a very beautiful girl, who, though only the daughter of a celebrated restaurateur of Brussels, might have been a Princess, so far as look and breeding and elegance were concerned.

"This is to be the correct thing," cried Cleremont. "We open with a quadrille; take your partners, gentlemen, and to your places."

Nothing could be more perfectly proper and decorous than this dance. It is possible, perhaps, that we exceeded a little on the score of reverential observances: we bowed and curtsied at every imaginable opportunity, and with an air of homage that smacked of a court; and if we did raise our eyes to each other, as we recovered from the obeisance, it was with a look of the softest and most subdued deference. I really began to think that the only hoydenish people I had ever seen were ladies and gentlemen. As for Eccles, he wore an air of almost reverential gravity, and Hotham was sternly composed. At last, however, we came to the finish, and Cleremont, clapping his hands thrice, called out *grande ronde*; and taking

his partner's arm within his own, led off at a galop; the music striking up one of Strauss's wildest, quickest strains. Away he went down an alley, and we all after him, stamping and laughing like mad. The sudden revulsion from the quiet of the moment before was electric; no longer arm-in-arm, but with arms close clasped around the waist, away we went over the smooth turf with a wild delight to which the music imparted a thrilling ecstasy. Now through the dense shade we broke into a blaze of light, where a great buffet stood; and round this we all swarmed at once, and glasses were filled with champagne, and vivas shouted again and again; and I heard that my health was toasted, and a very sweet voice—the lips were on my ear—whispered I know not what, but it sounded very like wishing me joy and love, while others were deafening me about long life and happiness.

I do not remember,—I do not want to remember—all the nonsense I talked, and with a volubility quite new to me; my brain felt on fire with a sort of wild ecstasy, and as homage and deference met me at every step, my every wish acceded to, and each fancy that struck me hailed at once as bright inspiration, no wonder was it if I lost myself in a perfect ocean of bliss. I told Pauline she should be the queen of the fête, and ordered a splendid wreath of flowers to be brought, which I placed upon her brows, and saluted her with her title, amidst the cheering shouts of willing toasters. Except to make a tour of a waltz or a polka with some one I knew, I would not permit her to dance with any but myself; and she, I must say, most graciously submitted to the tyranny, and seemed to delight in the extravagant expressions of my admiration for her.

If I was madly jealous of her, I felt the most overwhelming delight in the praises bestowed upon her beauty and her gracefulness. Perhaps the consciousness that I was a mere boy, and that thus a freedom might be used towards me that would have been reprehensible with one older, led her to treat me with a degree of intimacy that was positively captivating; and before our third waltz was over, I was calling her Pauline, and she calling me Digby, like old friends.

"Isn't that boy of Norcott's going it to-night?" I heard a man say as I swung past in a polka, and I turned fiercely to catch the speaker's eye, and show him I meant to call him to book.

"Eh, Eccles, your pupil is a credit to you!" cried another.

"I'm a Dutchman if that fellow doesn't rival his father."

"He'll be far and away beyond him," muttered another; "for he has none of Norcott's crotchets,—he's a scamp 'pur et simple.'"

"Where are you breaking away from me, Digby?" said Pauline, as I tried to shake myself free of her.

"I want to follow those men. I have a word to say to them."

"You shall do no such thing, dearest," muttered she. "You have just told me, I am to be your little wife, and I'm not going to see my husband rushing into a stupid quarrel."

"And you are mine then," cried I, "and you will wear this ring as a betrothal? Come, let me take off your glove."

"That will do, Digby: that's quite enough for courtesy and a little too much for deference," whispered Eccles in my ear; for I was kissing her hand about a hundred times over, and she laughing at my raptures as an excellent joke. "I think you'd better lead the way to supper."

Secretly resolving that I would soon make very short work of Mr. Eccles and his admonitions, I gave him a haughty glance and moved on. I remember very little more than that I walked to the head of the table and placed Pauline on my right. I know I made some absurd speech in return for their drinking my health, and spoke of us, and what *we*—Pauline and myself—felt, and with what pleasure we should see our friends often around us, and a deal of that tawdry trash that comes into a brain addled with noise and heated with wine. I was frequently interrupted; uproarious cheers at one moment would break forth, but still louder laughter would ring out and convulse the whole assembly. Even addled and confused as I was, I could see that some were my partisans and friends, who approved of all I said, and wished me to give a free course to my feelings; and there were others—two or three—who tried to stop me: and one actually said aloud, "If that boy of Norcott's is not suppressed, we shall have no supper."

Recalled to my dignity as a host by this impertinence, I believe I put some restraint on my eloquence, and I now addressed myself to do the honours of the table. Alas, my attentions seldom strayed beyond my lovely neighbour, and I firmly believed that none could remark the rapture with which I gazed on her, or as much as suspected that I had never quitted the grasp of her hand from the moment we sat down.

"I think you'd better let mademoiselle dance the cotillon with the Count Vauglas," whispered Eccles in my ear.

"And why, sir?" rejoined I, half fiercely.

"I think you might guess," said he, with a smile; "at least you could if you were to get up."

"And would she—would Pauline—I mean, would Mademoiselle Delorme—approve of this arrangement?"

"No, Monsieur Digby, not if it did not come from you. We shall sit in the shade yonder for half an hour or so, and then, when you are rested, we'll join the cotillon."

"Get that boy off to bed, Eccles," said Cleremont, who did not scruple to utter the words aloud.

I started up to make an indignant rejoinder; some fierce insult was on my lips; but passion, and excitement, and wine mastered me, and I sank back on my seat overcome and senseless.

CHAPTER XIII.

A NEXT MORNING.

I COULD not awake on the day after the fête. I was conscious that Nixon was making a considerable noise—that he shut and opened doors and windows, splashed the water into my bath, and threw down my boots with an unwonted energy ; but through all this consciousness of disturbance I slept on, and was determined to sleep, let him make what uproar he pleased.

"It's nigh two o'clock, sir !" whispered he in my ear, and I replied by a snort.

"I'm very sorry to be troublesome, sir ; but the master is very impatient : he was getting angry when I went in last time."

These words served to dispel my drowsiness at once, and the mere thought of my father's displeasure acted on me like a strong stimulant.

"Does papa want me ?" cried I, sitting up in bed ; "did you say papa wanted me ?"

"Yes, sir," said a deep voice ; and my father entered the room, dressed for the street, and with his hat on.

"You may leave us," said he to Nixon ; and as the man withdrew my father took a chair and sat down close to my bedside.

"I have sent three messages to you this morning," said he, gravely, "and am forced at last to come myself."

I was beginning my apologies, when he stopped me, and said, "That will do ; I have no wish to be told why you overslept yourself ; indeed I have already heard more on that score than I care for."

He paused, and though perhaps he expected me to say something, I was too much terrified to speak.

"I perceive," said he, "you understand me : you apprehend that I know of your doings of last night, and that any attempt at excuse is hopeless. I have not come here to reproach you for your misconduct ; I reproach myself for a mistaken estimate of you ; I ought to have known—and if you had been a horse I would have known—that your cross-breeding would tell on you. The bad drop was sure to betray itself. I will not dwell on this, nor have I time. Your conduct last night makes my continued residence here impossible. I cannot continue in a city where my tradespeople have become my guests, and where the honours of my house have been extended to my tailor and my butcher. I shall leave this, therefore, as soon as I can conclude my arrangements to sell this place : you must quit it at once. Eccles will be ready to start with you this evening for the Rhine, and then for the interior of Germany—I suspect Weimar will do. He will be paymaster, and you will conform to his wishes strictly as regards expense. Whether you study or not, whether you employ your time profitably and creditably, or whether you pass it in indolence, is a matter that completely regards yourself. As for

me, my conscience is acquitted when I provide you with the means of acquirement, and I no more engage you to benefit by these advantages, than I do to see you eat the food that is placed before you. The compact that unites us enjoins distinct duties from each. You need not write to me till I desire you to do so; and when I think it proper we should meet I will tell you."

If, while he spoke these harsh words to me, the slightest touch of feeling—had one trace of even sorrow crossed his face,—my whole heart would have melted at once, and I would have thrown myself at his feet for forgiveness. There was, however, a something so pitiless in his tone, and a look so full of scorn in his steadfast eye, that every sentiment of pride within me—that same pride I inherited from himself—stimulated me to answer him, and I said boldly,—“If the people I saw here last night were not as well born as your habitual guests, sir, I'll venture to say there was nothing in their manner or deportment to be ashamed of.”

“I am told that Mdllo. Pauline Delorme was charming,” said he; and the sarcasm of his glance covered me with shame and confusion. He had no need to say more: I could not utter a word.

“This is a topic I will not discuss with you, sir,” said he, after a pause. “I intended you to be a gentleman, and to live with gentlemen. Your tastes incline differently, and I make no opposition to them. As I have told you already, I was willing to launch you into life: I'll not engage to be your pilot. Any interest I take, or could take in you, must be the result of your own qualities. These have not impressed me strongly up to this; and were I to judge by what I have seen, I should send you back to those you came from.”

“Do so, then, if it will only give me back the nature I brought away with me!” cried I passionately; and my throat swelled till I felt almost choked with emotion.

“That nature,” said he, with a sneer on the word, “was costumed, if I remember right, in a lincn blouse and a pair of patched shoes, and I believe they have been preserved along with some other family relics.”

I bethought me at once of the tower and its humble furniture, and a sense of terror overcame me, that I was in presence of one who could cherish hate with such persistence.

“The fumes of your last night's debauch are some excuse for your bad manners, sir,” said he, rising. “I leave you to sleep them off; only remember that the train starts at eight this evening, and it is my desire you do not miss it.”

With this he left me. I arose at once and proceeded to dress. It was a slow proceeding, for I would often stop, and sit down to think what course would best befit me to take at this moment. At one instant it seemed to me I ought to follow him, and declare that the splendid slavery in which I lived had no charm for me—that the faintest glimmering of self-respect and independence was more my ambition than all the luxuries that surrounded me; and when I had resolved I would do this, a sudden

dread of his presence—his eye, that I could never face without shrinking—the tones of his voice, that smote me like a lash,—so abashed me that I gave up the effort with despair.

Might he not consent to give me some pittance, enough to save her from the burden of my support, and send me back to my mother? Oh, if I could summon courage to ask this! This assistance need be continued only for a few years, for I hoped and believed I should not ever have to live as a dependant. What if I were to write him a few lines to this purport? I could do this even better than speak it.

I sat down at once and began.

"Dear papa,"—he would never permit me to use a more endearing word. "Dear papa, I hope you will forgive me troubling you about myself and my future. I would like to fit myself for some career or calling by which I might become independent. I could work very hard and study very closely if I were back with my mother."

As I reached this far, the door opened and Eccles appeared.

"All right!" cried he; "I was afraid I should catch you in bed still, and I'm glad you're up and preparing for the road. Are you nearly ready?"

"Not quite; I wanted to write a letter before I go. I was just at it."

"Write from Verviers or Bonn; you'll have lots of time on the road."

"Ay, but my letter might save me from the journey if I sent it off now!"

He looked amazed at this, and I at once told him my plan and showed him what I had written.

"You don't mean to say you'd have courage to send this to your father?"

"And why not?"

"Well, all I have to say is, don't do it till I'm off the premises; for I'd not be here when he reads it for a trifle. My dear Digby," said he, with a changed tone, "you don't know Sir Roger; you don't know the violence of his temper if he imagines himself what he calls outraged, which sometimes means questioned. Take your hat and stick, and go seek your fortune, in Heaven's name, if you must; but don't set out on your life's journey with a curse or a kick, or possibly both. If I preach patience, my dear boy, I have had to practise it too. Put up your traps in your portmanteau; come down and take some dinner: we'll start with the night-train; and take my word for it, we'll have a jolly ramble and enjoy ourselves heartily. If I know anything of life, it is that there's no such mistake in the world as hunting up annoyances. Let them find us if they can, but let us never run after them."

"My heart is too heavy for such enjoyment as you talk of."

"It won't be so to-morrow, or at all events the day after. Come, stir yourself now with your packing; a thought has just struck me that you'll be very grateful to me for, when I tell it you."

"What is it?" asked I half carelessly.

"You must ask with another guess-look in your eye if you expect me to tell you."

"You could tell me nothing that would gladden me."

"Nor propose anything that you'd like?" asked he.

"Nor that either," said I despondingly.

"Oh, if that be the case, I give up my project; not that it was much of a project after all. What I was going to suggest was, that instead of dining here, we should put our traps into a cab, and drive down to Delorme's and have a pleasant little dinner there, in the garden; it's quite close to the railroad, so that we could start at the last whistle."

"That does sound pleasantly," said I; "there's nothing more irksome in its way than hanging about a station waiting for departure."

"So then you agree?" cried he, with a malicious twinkle in his eye that I affected not to understand.

"Yes," said I indolently; "I see little against it; and if nothing else, it saves me a leave-taking with Captain Hotham and Cleremont."

"By the way, you are not to ask to see madame; your father reminded me to tell you this. The doctors say she is not to be disturbed on any account. What a chance that I did not forget this."

Whether it was that I was too much concerned for my own misfortunes to have a thought that was not selfish, or that another leave-taking that loomed in the distance was uppermost in my thoughts, certain it is I felt this privation far less acutely than I might.

"She's a nice little woman, and deserves a better lot than she has met with."

"What sort of dinner will Delorme give us?" said I, affecting the air of a man about town, but in reality throwing out the bait to lead the talk in that direction.

"First-rate, if we let him; that is, if we only say, 'Order dinner for us, Monsieur Pierre.' There's no man understands such a mandate more thoroughly."

"Then that's what I shall say," cried I, "as I cross his threshold."

"He'll serve you Madeira with your soup, and Steinberger with your fish, thirty francs a bottle, each of them."

"Be it so. We shall drink to our pleasant journey," said I; and I actually thought my voice had caught the tone and cadence of my father's as I spoke.

Army Reform.

Among the many subjects which it is possible may receive attention in the next Parliament there is one which is of immediate, and every day becomes of more pressing, importance—the great expense of our army. The rapid manner in which our estimates have swelled to their present enormous proportions has, even in this extravagant age, attracted attention, and suggested an inquiry whether the force which we now maintain, even if it is necessary, might not be raised in some more economical way. Political readers have rushed into the discussions; all the leading newspapers have taken part in it; and some of the ablest men in the army, and one of the ablest civilians, have published their proposals for the solution of this difficult and intricate question.

It would be absolutely impossible, in the short space of an article in this Magazine, to enter into all the questions connected with the subject. But it is possible to deal with a very important portion of it; the same portion, in fact, as that which Sir C. Trevelyan has considered, viz. the class from which our soldiers should be drawn, the terms on which they should be raised, and the principles on which their commanders should be selected.

Few questions are more difficult to answer than the size of the army which any particular State requires; but, for the purposes of an article specially devoted to the consideration of the proper composition of the army, it will be sufficient to assume that the 137,580 men asked for in this year's estimates are really necessary for the defence of the United Kingdom and its dependencies, exclusive of India.

The distribution of these men is a matter of considerable importance. According to the estimates 95,810 men are serving at home, and 42,220 men in the colonies; but the estimates in this respect are not quite explicit, as the second appendix from which these numbers are taken does not show the number of the engineers, artillery and cavalry, which are serving abroad. Allowing for this defect, it may in round numbers be said that there are about 89,000 men in this country, and 48,000 in the colonies. That the men who may be employed in the United Kingdom must be of the same race as ourselves is clear to every one. It would be intolerable to see a sepoy mounting guard at St. James's, or a regiment of Sikhs attempting to keep order among a London mob. But it is not clear that the men raised for service in our colonies need necessarily be Europeans, and that our large colonial dependencies and Indian Empire might not be called upon to relieve us of some of the pressure which our heavy recruiting occasions.

Our colonies may be conveniently divided into three classes. 1. Purely military positions, such as Gibraltar and Malta, in which it is necessary to maintain military establishments in great efficiency. 2. Healthy settlements of great extent and growing prosperity, such as Canada and the Australasian colonies. 3. Unhealthy settlements, some of which are held for military reasons, and others for objects which it is unnecessary at the present moment to dwell upon.

It is a matter of grave doubt whether it would be politic to employ a certain number of native Indian troops in our Mediterranean garrisons. It is possible to say much both for and against the proposition. But the fact that there is a doubt as to the propriety of the course, proves that these colonies are not the places where the experiment of substituting Indian for European troops ought first to be tried. The same arguments, which make it clear that it is impossible to employ native Indian troops in the United Kingdom, strictly apply to those great territories—Australia and Canada—where a portion of our fellow-subjects is permanently settled. But the colonies which I have placed in the third category differ in every respect from those which I have hitherto been considering. The fact that European constitutions are not adapted to such climates as those, for instance, of the Mauritius and Hong Kong, surely ought to make us consider whether it is not possible to substitute native Indian for European troops in these places.

The subject has recently received some attention, as a parliamentary committee was appointed in 1867 for the express purpose of inquiring into it. That committee, though professedly in favour of the adoption of the proposal, has contrived to throw an immense amount of cold water upon it. They seem to consider that, because they have proved that no saving would result from the proposal, the proposal itself is of little value. But this fact alone ought not to affect the adoption or the rejection of the scheme. If the climates of certain countries, which it is essential to protect with an armed force, are peculiarly unsuited to European constitutions, it is surely advisable to garrison them with native Indian troops. It is no answer to say that no saving would result from the alteration; on the contrary it does not follow that the alteration ought not to be made, even if it were attended with a slight expense.

The committee have, however, done good service by proving, on the almost unanimous testimony of "numerous witnesses of great authority," that "no prejudices need be apprehended among at least the large majority of the Indian races which would deter them from enlisting for a foreign service if sufficient pecuniary advantages were held out to them." "The Madras, Bombay and Bengal armies have been employed beyond seas from the earliest period of our connection with India;" and since the general order of July, 1856, the services of no recruit have been accepted, "who does not at the time of his engagement distinctly undertake to serve beyond seas." It is, therefore, clear that it is possible to obtain native Indian troops for service out of India, and the only question

that remains for consideration in connection with the subject is the propriety of so doing, a matter on which little light is thrown by the evidence submitted to the committee. That evidence represents, in fact, every phase of opinion on the subject from that of General Hodgson, who denounces the scheme "as a kind of moral suicide," to that of General Merewether, who regards its adoption "as a most politic move." In such a conflict of opinion it is natural to lean on the finding of the committee, however coldly it may be expressed; and the committee recommend that the experiment should be tried in certain unhealthy colonies and colonies contiguous to India. It remains to be considered what are the limits attached to this recommendation. It is clear, from the reasons which have already been given, that Indian troops cannot properly, at present, be employed either in our Mediterranean garrisons or in our Australasian and North-American colonies. But, after these deductions have been made, there is a force of 20,000 men scattered through our other colonies, all, or nearly all of which may be comprised in one of the two classes of colonies in which the committee recommend the employment of Indian troops. If these Indians were in future to be substituted for three-fourths of the British troops stationed in these colonies, it would only be necessary to provide a force of 5,000 Europeans for their future occupation; and a deduction might be made of no less than 15,000 from the 48,000 men which, at first sight, it seems necessary to provide for colonial service. The number of British troops required for colonial service would consequently only amount to 88,000 men.

Of these 88,000 men 16,000 are required for Canada, and about 2,000 for Australia and New Zealand. It is essential to point out that if we determine to maintain this number of troops in these countries, we shall have a right to insist that the burden of their maintenance shall be borne by the colonies. When a great colony becomes sufficiently independent and powerful to assert its right to self-government, and practically to deal with the mother-country on terms of equality, the duty of providing for its own protection ought to devolve upon itself. The consideration is of importance to the military reformer, because it proves that the demand which our colonies make upon us for troops will ultimately be confined to our Mediterranean garrisons, and to the small proportion of British soldiers which it may be advisable to send to the colonies, which will ultimately be mainly garrisoned by native Indian troops; and that there is consequently no necessarily permanent feature in the circumstances of the colonial service of our army to constitute a valid reason for continuing our present system of long enlistments, if for other reasons it should be thought inadvisable to do so.

But it may possibly be thought that the circumstances of another branch of our empire, India, affect this conclusion. India, it is clear, must be held mainly by British troops; and the distance of India from this country makes it inexpedient to relieve the regiments which are stationed there more frequently than once in every ten or twelve years. At first sight, then,

it seems suicidal to enlist men for less than ten years, when their regiment will probably be sent abroad before their term of service has expired. But surely if, on general grounds, it is advisable to enlist men for short periods, the fact that such an arrangement would be inconvenient, so far as India is concerned, does not necessarily prove that short enlistments are a mistake, though it possibly indicates that it might be advisable, as indeed has been more than once suggested, to have two armies; one for home, and one for foreign service. I am far from saying that I believe the adoption of this alternative to be necessary. On the contrary, even with a system of short enlistments, I think that there need not be any difficulty in garrisoning India. Two deviations from our present practice are required to effect this object. The strongest of our line regiments comprise now about 980 non-commissioned officers and men; the weakest about 600. While the regiment is abroad it is kept up, as a rule, at its full strength: when it returns home it is allowed to fall to its minimum strength. The effect of this arrangement, of course, is that the heaviest recruiting goes on when the regiment is abroad, and when, therefore, the cost of the recruits' travelling expenses is heavy; and that the least amount of recruiting takes place when the regiment is at home, and when the expenses are proportionately small. The practice clearly demands a remedy; and the remedy is a very simple one. Let a regiment on leaving England always muster its full quota of 980 men; let it, during its foreign service, be allowed gradually to dwindle till, on its return home, it can only muster 600 men. The process should then, of course, be reversed, and the strength of the regiment should gradually be raised till, on its again sailing for foreign service, it should comprise once more its full quota of 980 men. Under this arrangement the expense of replacing 880 of the casualties while the regiment is abroad, will, at any rate, be avoided.

But it is equally clear that, if the whole of the men are enlisted for less than ten years, and the term of the service of the regiment abroad exceeds ten years, the whole of the men, and not 880 only, will be entitled to their discharge during the foreign service of the regiment. But this difficulty can easily be obviated by a very simple arrangement. Let a list be kept in every regiment of volunteers for foreign service; let the members of a regiment about to go abroad who are unwilling to re-enlist be drafted, for the completion of their service, into other regiments at home, and let their places be supplied with volunteers from these latter regiments, who should engage, under the promise of extra pay, to re-enlist for the whole foreign service of the regiment into which they are drafted. The scheme is an extension of the proposal made by the recruiting commissioners, who proposed to limit the offer of re-enlistment to the men of the regiment ordered abroad; but there seems to be no reason why the offer should not be made, in the manner I have suggested, to the whole army. We are surely entitled to assume, from the results which attended General Peel's efforts in inducing soldiers to re-enlist, that this secondary system of recruiting is certain to be successful.

There is nothing, then, in the foreign service of our army which need interfere with the existence of a system of enlistment for short periods. It hardly needs words to prove that, on general grounds, short periods are preferable to long periods of enlistment. The history of recruiting affords abundant evidence of the truth of the allegation. Before the Limited Enlistment Act was passed in 1847, the period of a soldier's service was invariably twenty-one years. The difficulty of obtaining men led to the passing of that act, which curtailed the period of a soldier's service from twenty-one to ten years. But the act withdrew from the man with only ten years' service, the advantage of a pension, which was always accorded to the man with twenty-one years' service. And yet, notwithstanding the fact that this advantage was withheld, experience proved that we could get men for the shorter, when we could not get them for the longer period. The recruiting commissioners, with this fact before them, would probably have never recommended the prolongation of the period of enlistment from ten to twelve years, if they had not been impelled to do so by the bugbear of the foreign service of our army. The logical deduction from the fact that we could get men for ten years when we could not get them for twenty-one years, was, that in order to get men still more easily, it was necessary to reduce, not extend, the period of service. To satisfy the supposed requirements of foreign service the term of service was lengthened, and the country was called on to bear an extra charge, in the shape of increased pay, of nearly 500,000*l.* a year. There is no proof that this charge would have been necessary if other counsels had prevailed.

The exact term of service for which a soldier should enlist, is, of course, a matter open to grave doubt. In suggesting a term of seven years I have, I confess, been guided by the accidental circumstance that seven is a third part of twenty-one—the period of service which at present entitles a man to a pension; but, if the advisability of reducing the term of service be conceded, the extent of the reduction is a matter of comparatively small importance. It is, however, essential that, with the exception of the men re-enlisting for foreign service, and with another exception, to which I shall afterwards advert, the men, on the expiration of the term, should not be asked to re-enlist, but, on the contrary, should be forced to go.

The substitution of short for long periods of enlistment has often been suggested; but I believe that I have been the first to propose that the men whose first period of service has expired should not be permitted to re-engage, and yet, as I view the case, the whole essence of the scheme lies in the fulfilment of this particular condition. The evil of our present system is that it reduces men to the same level. None, if they fulfil certain physical conditions, are too bad for the purposes of the army. Government sets its net, and all that are entrapped into it are "fish;" or, to take another illustration from another proverb, Government enters the labour market as a beggar, and cannot afford to be a chooser. But if all this was reversed, if, with two exceptions, Government was to refuse to

allow the men whose term of service had expired to re-engage, the whole status of the army would be raised, and it would be placed, for the first time, on an equality with other callings.

The contingent advantages of the alteration I am urging are very great. Re-enlisted men receive, under the present regulations, higher pay than men in their first term of service; so that, if the system of re-enlistments was discontinued, this higher pay would at once be saved. Re-enlisted men; in the next place, are entitled, on the completion of their second term of service, to a pension; so that, if the system of re-enlistments was discontinued, these pensions, amounting to upwards of 1,000,000*l.* a year, would be saved. It is tolerably clear that if men are enlisted for long periods, it is impossible to do away with pensions. It is impossible to discharge a man after twenty-one years' service, and consequently about forty years old, without a pension. The prime of his life is over, and he is unable, and daily becomes less able, to compete with younger men in the race for life. But, if a man is discharged after seven years' service, or when he is about twenty-five years old, he is in the prime of his life. The training he has undergone has probably raised, if anything, his value as a labourer, and he has no reason to fear the competition of other men. It is worth also remembering that, with a system of short enlistments, there is no reason why married quarters should not be abolished. So long as men are allowed to remain in the army for a period equal to more than half the average life of man, it is clear that they must be allowed to marry. But the case is very different if, instead of remaining in the army till they are forty, they are discharged at twenty-five years of age. There can be no hardship in refusing a lad of twenty-five permission to marry.

But the greatest advantage incidental to a system of enlistments for short periods remains to be stated. It seems tolerably clear that if a man were enlisted for a very short period of service in the army—*e. g.* seven years—it would be possible, at the same time, to arrange that he should serve for a further period in a reserve force. The success of the scheme would, no doubt, be in some measure dependent on the manner in which this reserve was constituted; but if it was organized on sufficiently elastic principles—if the members of it, for instance, were at liberty to reside in any county they chose to select, and to follow any calling they chose to adopt; if they were only required to assemble for training once in each year, and no efforts were spared to make the training enjoyable; there does not seem any reason for anticipating that the existence of a reserve would increase the difficulties of recruiting, while it would very probably be the means of infusing a military spirit into the whole country. A slight addition to the pay now given to the militia would probably be sufficient for this reserve force. The size, and therefore importance, of the reserve would, in some degree, depend on the length of time during which the men stipulated to serve in it. If this period was fixed at fourteen years, which, added to the previous service in the army of seven years, would make up a total service of twenty-one years, the reserve would

become the most numerous and the most important portion of our whole force..

I have been hitherto considering the advantages attendant on a system of short enlistments. It will give completeness to these remarks if I advert shortly to the objections which may be urged against its adoption. The foreign service objection, if I may so express the objection based on the long foreign services of our army, I have already alluded to. It remains for me to notice the military objection.

Briefly stated, the military objection amounts to this: That a regiment composed of old soldiers is a more perfect machine, and, therefore, more efficient as a regiment than a regiment composed of young soldiers; that the men are steadier, and therefore more trustworthy; and that, if there were no old soldiers in a regiment, no steady veterans on whom the commanding officer could depend, it would be impossible to keep up its efficiency and discipline.

But, in the first place, are old soldiers better as soldiers than younger men? If we look at modern history, there is nothing to prove that this is the case. Napoleon's most brilliant campaigns were fought with armies composed in the main of young soldiers. In 1866 the young soldiers of Prussia beat the trained veterans of Austria; and the Prussian army to-day, composed of men with less than four years' service, is probably the finest army in the world. If we inquire into the cause of these facts, is it not tolerably clear that the best troops are those which can move the most quickly. Pace is the first requirement in the rapid age we live in; and the circumstances of war seem to afford no exception to the rule. Now that the rifle has superseded the blunderbuss, and that battles are fought with a mile of ground between the contending armies, mere strength of arm in a soldier is an immeasurably inferior quality to the power of pace. But pace is essentially the qualification of youth. For hard fighting hand to hand, a man at thirty-five, or even at forty years of age, may easily defeat a youngster of twenty-five; but in a race across the open, or in a long march up and down hill, the youngster will leave the veteran far behind.

But there is another way of regarding the question. The efficiency of an army must, in a great measure, depend on the morale of the men. The amount of crime in an army is consequently a matter of enormous importance. If, by reducing or lengthening the term of service, the amount of crime in the army can be sensibly diminished, the moral tone of the army will be proportionately raised. Now it is a very startling fact that crime is rapidly increasing amongst soldiers of seven years' service and upwards. The increase is accompanied by a decrease of crime amongst young soldiers, and is so rapid that it is well worth studying. The number of soldiers admitted to military prisons in 1858 was, according to Colonel Henderson, the Inspector-General, 6,488, and of these 585, or $\frac{1}{11}$ th, had above seven years' service; the number similarly admitted in 1862 was 5,841, and of these 1,159, or above $\frac{1}{5}$ th, had upwards of seven years' service;

the number admitted in 1807 was 6,674, of whom 2,895, or nearly one-half, had upwards of seven years' service. Can anything prove more conclusively that the value of the old soldier, as an instrument for raising the moral tone of the army, has been enormously overrated?

It has, however, been sometime asserted that, if all the soldiers of a regiment were discharged after a few years' service, there would be no nucleus left from which the non-commissioned officers could be drawn; and there seems unquestionably to be a certain degree of force in this argument. But whatever force there may be in it, it surely does not prove that all the men, but only that a certain per-centage of the men, ought to be retained for long periods in the army. I have already hinted at the possibility of some such scheme, and I think that it might be carried out by the establishment of a *corps d'honneur* in every regiment. This *corps d'honneur*, which should not comprise more than one man in every ten, should be composed of men of upwards of seven years' service. The position of its members, who should be promoted to it on account of their exceptional efficiency, should be indisputably superior to that of our labouring classes. The existence of such a body of men in every regiment seems infinitely more likely to raise the status of the army generally than the promotion of a certain number of soldiers annually from the ranks. Promotion from the ranks leaves the status of the soldier generally exactly where it was. The man promoted undergoes an "apotheosis." His former comrades may possibly recognize the whilome private in Ensign Jones; but the rustic who is to be tempted to enlist by this possibility of promotion, can hardly be expected to believe that Ensign Jones was originally a plough-boy like himself. The "fly" is too gaudy, and the rustic does not "rise" to it. But if the rustic saw that one out of every ten of his own equals was enjoying a comfortable competence, he would appreciate the fact, as he would feel that it was in his own power to attain the same reward. He would be likely to join the army for the sake of attaining it, and he would strive his hardest to attain it during the term of his service. The existence of the reward would offer an inducement to him to enlist, and an inducement, after his enlistment, to good conduct.

No doubt a *corps d'honneur* of this description could not be established without some expense. But the expense would not be so great as at first sight it appears, as the non-commissioned officers, who would be almost sure to form a part of the corps, are already so well paid that a very slight addition would have to be made to their present emoluments. No doubt it would be necessary that the members of the *corps d'honneur* should, on their discharge, be entitled to pensions; but these pensions, it seems to me, ought to be issued on entirely different regulations to those already in force. The objection to the present arrangement is that, on the completion of a definite amount of service, which entitles him to a pension, the soldier has no inducement to remain in the army. His chief object is to secure the pension with the least possible amount of service. This state of things has arisen from the pension having been fixed at a

definite sum without reference to the length of the soldier's service. But, if pensions are to be granted at all, it is clear that it ought to be the object of the State to postpone their payment till the latest possible period. In other words, the amount of the pension ought to depend on the length of service; and, though it is unquestionably necessary that the man should be discharged who become physically unfit for military service, it ought, speaking generally, to be made advantageous to the man to postpone their retirement to the latest period possible. The policy, therefore, which drives men out of the army, with a pension, after twenty-one years, is as extravagant as the policy which induces soldiers, on the expiration of their first period of service, to re-enlist, for the sake of ultimately attaining a pension.

The system under which recruiting should be carried on still remains for consideration. Nothing can be more rude, and nothing can be more immoral, than the present system of bounties. Bounties, moreover, have one fault peculiarly visible, that they indirectly promote desertion. I do not mean to say that the inducement which a bounty offers to a man to desert, is equivalent to the inducement which it offers him to enlist. But I do mean to say that the greater the bounty, and, consequently, the greater the inducement to enlist, the greater, also, is the inducement to desert.

Nor are bounties the only things in connection with our recruiting machinery which require alteration. It is impossible to conceive anything worse than the entire system. A sergeant, capable of exercising some not very commendable virtues, is sent to bribe and cajole some wretched peasants, whom he has previously intoxicated, to enlist. But has he anything about him to induce the best man to follow him? What are the usual inducements to an individual to join any particular profession? Surely, if we omit for the moment the red coat and busby theory, it is either the immediate attainment, or the prospect of shortly attaining, an enviable position. Now, from a working-man's point of view, there can be little doubt that the position of a staff-sergeant of volunteers must seem particularly desirable. The staff-sergeant of volunteers has a good income, and only a fair amount of particularly pleasant work; and, in a recruiting point of view, he has the additional qualification of being brought into almost daily communication, in the ordinary discharge of his duties, with the class from which recruits must necessarily be mainly drawn, and especially with those individual members of the class, who have evinced a particular liking for military pursuits. Nor are these his only qualifications. In one sentence, he is everywhere while the recruiting sergeant is nowhere. The latter, indeed, wanders at the expense of the country—a suspected object—from place to place; but the latter exists already in almost every village of the kingdom. It is marvellous how his qualifications can have been so long overlooked.

The treatment of the soldier, subsequently to his enlistment, is a matter of considerable importance; but, important as that matter is, it

would not be possible to treat of it in this article, the object of which is to show how the army should be raised, and how it should be officered.

The question of officering the army resolves itself naturally, just as the recruiting question does, into two divisions. The first of these is the important question whether the present proportion of officers to men in the army is correct; the second, which has been the more frequently considered, and which is the more attractive of the two, is whether the army is officered in the most advisable way. The exact proportion which the officers should bear to the men is a problem which it would be impossible to solve. But it is not difficult to prove that the present proportion of officers to men in the English army is excessive. According to Major Leahy, who has been very generally followed, but who seems to have based his calculations on the maximum strength of our regiments, and on those regiments which are by no means the most rich in officers, the proportion of officers to men in the English army is 1 to 28; in the French army 1 to 33; in the Austrian army 1 to 40; and in the Prussian army 1 to 49. The proportion of officers to men, therefore, in the English army is immeasurably higher than that in any of the great continental armies, and there seems to be no reason why it should not be reduced.

If this is admitted, it only remains to be considered in what ranks the reduction should be made. Economists, with a keen eye to the greater economical advantages of a reduction in the higher ranks, but with a clear apprehension that a reduction in the higher ranks alone is impracticable, will probably recommend that the reduction should be effected in equal proportions through all the ranks; the representatives of military thought will, on the other hand, probably suggest that the reduction should be made by the abolition of the lowest rank. But there are objections to both these courses. The present flow of promotion in the army is generally admitted to be insufficient, and a proportionate reduction in all the ranks would, of course, in no way whatever affect the rate of promotion. Nor would the abolition of the lowest rank increase the flow of promotion. The number of steps would be reduced, but the time which it takes to pass through each grade would not be altered. Constant promotion is, depend upon it, quite as important a matter as rapid promotion. A man is more likely to be contented who, in a certain number of years, gains two steps of 50*l.* each, than the man who, in the same time, gains only one step of 100*l.*

But there is another reason against abolishing the rank of ensign which it is worth while to consider, namely, that the pay of an ensign is amply sufficient for a young man on his first joining the service, and is at least equal to the pay of any other profession to which it can properly be compared. As I am at issue with a very great authority, Sir C. Trevelyan, on this point, it may be worth while to consider it a little more closely. The pay of the ensign of a line regiment is 9*l.* 5*s.* a year, and is nearly the same as the pay of the clerk on joining one of the best Government offices. But the ensign has his lodging

free, which the clerk has not; and, though he is subjected to certain stoppages, he has also great privileges in the shape of getting an allowance for a servant, coals, &c. It is quite true that the ensign has to provide himself with an expensive uniform, and to respond to certain calls upon his purse, of which the clerk is in happy ignorance. But surely these facts do not prove that the pay of the ensign is insufficient, but that his uniform is absurdly expensive, and that he is "expected" to do certain things which ought to be no more required of him than of a clerk. If a young man can live in London as a gentleman for 100*l.* a year, he ought to be able to live on 91*l.* 5*s.* a year, besides his lodging, in a provincial town; and if he cannot there must be some cause other than the want of pay, which prevents him from doing so. It may, of course, be said that the clerk, equally with the ensign, cannot live on the pay. But this reply does not affect my argument, that no one proposes to raise the pay of the clerk; why, therefore, should they propose to raise the pay of the ensign?

But there is another reason which makes it, in my judgment, imperative to retain the lowest rank, and not to increase the pay of the lowest rank of the army. Certain men, and especially those men whom it is generally the object of military reformers to draw into the army—the men who have received nothing from their fathers but "a good education and a blessing," are very liable in selecting a profession to have more regard to its immediate advantages than to its future prospects. It is for this reason that many an able man joins the Civil Service who would, in all probability, be capable of making his weight felt at the bar. But there is no doubt that these men, after a few years' service, grow discontented with the prospects of their profession. They see their more provident contemporaries passing them with giant strides in the great race for wealth, and they blame their profession for their own defeat, while, in reality, they ought to blame themselves. Any increase of pay in the lowest ranks of a profession has a direct tendency to increase this unsatisfactory state of things.

If these arguments are correct, they surely prove that no diminution should be made in the grades of the army, and that the lowest rank among officers should not be abolished. But might not the reduction be effected both in lieutenancies as well as ensigncies; each of these ranks being deprived of one-half of their present numbers? By such an arrangement, an ensign would gain his lieutenancy, and a lieutenant would gain his company, in one-half the time that he does now. The reduction would be made in the ranks in which it could most easily be effected, and in the manner, on the whole, the most advantageous to the army.

The most attractive part of the question—the class from which officers should be drawn—still remains for consideration. However correct in theory promotion from the ranks may be, there is the preliminary objection to it, that it is unpopular among the upper classes, unpopular among soldiers, and of doubtful advantage to the men promoted. It forms, in fact, an apposite to the famous apology for hunting,—“The men like it; the

horses like it, the hounds like it, and you can't prove the foxes don't like it." The Englishman likes a gentleman above him. I dismiss the unworthy argument that blood will go where want of it fails; for it is ridiculous to urge that there are not non-commissioned officers as brave as any officers. But still the fact remains that men do not like to be commanded by one of their own class. Is it in human nature that a man should address as "sir" his former rear-rank man? Depend upon it, though in exceptional cases commissions may be properly given to private soldiers, the officers must mainly be drawn from a class outside the army.

But then immediately arise two other questions—Are the officers to be specially educated for commissions in the army? or are they to be educated in the same way as the rest of their contemporaries? And are they to pay for their commissions, or are they to receive them for nothing?

It is generally thought by military reformers that it is essential that officers should pass through a certain amount of special education at an establishment specially devoted to the purpose before they receive their commissions. If this special training is subsequent to the boy's ordinary education, it will materially raise the age at which the youth will be admitted into the army, as it will necessitate an additional period being devoted to the preliminary process of education. But is it desirable to raise the age at which lads are to be admitted into the army? Must not the effect of any such alteration be to raise the average age of officers throughout the army? and is not the army already suffering from a plethora of old officers? The addition, therefore, of a supplementary course to the youth's normal education has, on the face of it, a preliminary objection. But let us go a little deeper. With a few prominent exceptions, the great men of this and every age have been men educated at our great universities and schools. And those who have passed through that education will, I think, on reflection admit that one of the great advantages contingent to it is that the friends they made at school are distributed through a great many professions; and, consequently, when they meet, bring to the discussion of any subject, the views of the particular profession to which they individually belong. Men who have climbed to the top of the tree, and are in consequence on intimate terms with the foremost men in every branch of knowledge, have little notion how difficult it is for a young man to free himself from the prejudices of his profession, among the members of which he is necessarily thrown; and in which are his chief friends. His best chance of escape lies in his occasional intercourse with other friends in different professions; and where are those friends to be found, if they have not been made either at college or school?

It may, however, be urged that the success which has attended a separate system of education in the case of the Ordnance Corps, affords fair grounds for anticipating a similar success by the application of a similar system to the rest of the army. But is the great average ability of the officers of the Artillery and Engineers to be entirely ascribed to the Royal Military

Academy? On the contrary, is it not due to the strict examinations which a youth has to pass before he can enter those branches of the service? It may be urged that these examinations are a part of the system pursued at the academy. But they really have no connection with it whatever. It would be just as possible to have an open examination, and to apply the exact tests which are now in force to all the candidates who presented themselves, as to have an open examination for the Civil Service of India.

And are there any subjects in which it is desirable that youths on joining the army should be proficient? The science of drill does not necessitate a protracted course of training; and the interior economy of a regiment can only be understood by practical experience acquired in the regiment. To say that an officer, on joining the army, ought to be acquainted with military history, &c., is to say that an ensign ought to have a knowledge of the subjects which will be useful to him as a general officer. The idea is founded on the misconception that every ensign ought to be fit to hold the highest rank in the army; and from confusing the learning which a youth ought to have when he joins the army with the information which he ought to acquire before he is promoted. The Civil Service examinations are conducted on a different, and, as I think, a truer basis—that the capacity of a youth can best be tested by the degree of his acquaintance with those subjects which are normally taught at school.

It may also be fairly objected to military academies that they do not “pay.” The best test in this world of worth is, on the whole, success; and no parent would willingly send his son to a school which was known to be commercially a failure. In ordinary schools it is to the direct advantage of the master to promote the growth of his school. He reaps himself the profits of his ability and industry. But the success of a military school is of no advantage to the master. He is responsible to a Government office and not to the fathers of the boys; and his prospects depend on the will of a minister, and not on the success of the school. The boys are sent to it on entirely different grounds to those on which boys are usually sent to school. They are sent to secure an ulterior prize, not to profit by the course of training to which they are immediately to be subjected; the mere number of boys at school does not therefore afford any means of testing the real opinion which the parents of the boys have formed of it.

No subject connected with our military system has lately attracted more attention than the purchase question, which alone remains for consideration. The arguments, which have been urged on each side of the question, are so well known that it is sufficient here to say that, while the opponents of the system rely on exposing its defects and the bad consequences it engenders, its defenders are practically driven to avoid the main issue, and to plead the extenuating circumstances which, in their opinion, make its continuance advisable. These extenuating circumstances are—1st, That purchase has the effect of quickening the current of promotion. 2nd, That consequently all the “purchase officers” are in favour

of it. 3rd, That some of the "non-purchase officers" like it; and 4th, That it would cost a sum of some millions to get rid of it.

There is so much force in an argument which is backed by so large a sum of money, and by the resistance of the majority of those for whose advantage the money is to be spent, that the advocates of the system may well take heart. No House of Commons would, or even ought, to spend a large sum of money on a military object discountenanced by the military authorities and the most numerous section of army officers; and it seems, therefore, essential that those who desire the abolition of the system should devise some scheme by which it could be got rid of without cost to the State. No such scheme has, so far as I know, been hitherto promulgated, but, on the contrary, the arguments of those who desire the abolition of purchase, have been founded on the supposition that the State must consent to bear the cost of the change.

The regulation value of the commissions in the army was estimated in 1857 at 7,126,080*l.*, and for the purposes of this article it will be sufficient to assume that this value is the same now. But it is clear that, if purchase was abolished, it would be unnecessary to compensate all the officers of the army, but only those officers who decided, immediately on the change being made, or at some later period, to retire. Though the calculation is necessarily a difficult one, it may probably be assumed that the officers who would avail themselves of this opportunity would not exceed one-third of the whole number, and that Sir C. Trevelyan is therefore right in his conjecture that the compensation to which they would be entitled by regulation would not exceed 2,855,288*l.*; but it would probably be advisable and even equitable to compensate these officers for the extra prices which, with the tacit knowledge of the authorities, they had paid for their commissions, and not only for the prices which, according to the exact regulation, they ought to have paid; and if this course was taken, it would be necessary to add one-third to the regulation sum, bringing up the total to a little over 8,100,000*l.* Is it not, however, possible that some deductions may be made from this sum? I have already endeavoured to prove that the number of officers in the army is capable of reduction, and I have suggested that this reduction should be effected in the subalterns of the army. If that reduction was effected, the value of the commissions in the army, the holders of which would be entitled to compensation, would be reduced by at least 600,000*l.*; and by applying the same rule to that sum as has already been applied in the case of the officers generally, the officers who would probably apply for compensation would amount to one-third of the whole; and the compensation to be given to 200,000*l.*, if the regulation value is the standard, or 260,000*l.* if the extra prices are allowed. It seems therefore probable that the compensation to be granted on the abolition of purchase would not amount to more than 2,900,000*l.*, a capital sum representing, at 8 per cent., an annuity of 87,000*l.* a year. A sinking fund of 29,000*l.* would raise the annuity to 116,000*l.* a year, and would pay off the capital

in about forty years. The transaction could easily be effected either by "advances" out of balances, in accordance with the precedent of loans for public works, or out of savings-banks' funds, through the intervention of the National Debt Commission; and the amount of the annuity required is as nearly as possible identical with the saving which would be effected by the reduction I have suggested in the number of the officers of the army. The abolition of purchase does not, consequently, present any great financial difficulties; and the cost of it may be defrayed by a saving in the vote for the pay of those for whose advantage the abolition of purchase is desired.

It may be thought that many of the suggestions I have made are copied from those of the most prominent of army reformers, Sir C. Trevelyan; but though many of the means which I have ventured to suggest are identical with those which he has set forth, the objects at which he is aiming are entirely different to mine. Sir C. Trevelyan's object is to induce the great middle class of the country to join the army, and to attain that object, he relies on the prospect which his scheme affords of promotion to a commission. The abolition of the purchase system is, therefore, the keystone of his position. But though it is with great deference that I venture to differ from Sir C. Trevelyan, I cannot help thinking that men do not join a profession for the sake of the possible contingency of an advancement in life at an indefinite period. So far as I am able to judge, immediate advantages, even though they are comparatively small, afford greater temptation to youth than distant advantages of even greater value. Young men, as a rule, are not willing to pass through a disagreeable occupation for some years for the sake of a possible promotion many years afterwards.

I do not under-estimate the desire which is prevalent among members of every class to become gentlemen. But is Sir C. Trevelyan certain that his proposal would secure this object, and that the success of the scheme would not actually destroy the attraction on which he relies? Is he sure that he would be raising the soldier to the rank of a gentleman, and not lowering the officer to the rank of a soldier? Officers are not accepted as gentlemen because they are officers, but because they are gentlemen; and if Sir C. Trevelyan's leaven is mixed with the officers, will not the whole lump be leavened, and the status of the officer lowered? For myself I cannot help thinking that these reasons prove that the effort to tempt the great middle class into the army will certainly fail; and that Government, when it requires labourers, must be content to abide by the plain economical law, which is certain to lead them to the lowest class as the cheapest market in which they are likely to obtain that labour.

Old Towns in Provence.

TRAVELLERS journeying southward from Paris first meet with olive-trees near Montdragon or Montélimart—little towns, with old historic names, upon the road to Orange. It is here that we begin to feel ourselves within the land of Provence, where the Romans found a second Italy, and where the autumn of their antique civilization was followed, almost without an intermediate winter of barbarism, by the light and delicate spring-time of romance. Orange itself is full of Rome. Indeed, the ghost of the dead Empire seems there to be more real and living than the actual flesh and blood of modern time, as represented by narrow dirty streets and mean churches. It is the shell of the huge theatre, hollowed from the solid hill, and fronted with a wall that seems made rather to protect a city than to form a sounding-board for a stage, which first tells us that we have reached the old Arausio. Of all theatres this is the most impressive, stupendous, indestructible, the Colosseum hardly excepted; for in Rome herself we are prepared for something gigantic, while in the insignificant Arausio—a sort of antique Tewkesbury—to find such magnificence, durability, and vastness, impresses one with a nightmare sense that the old lioness of Empire can scarcely yet be dead. As we stand before the colossal, towering, amorphous precipice which formed the background of the Scena, we feel as if once more the “heartquaking sound of Consul Romanus” might be heard; as if Roman knights and deputies, arisen from the dead, with faces hard and stern as Trajan’s frieze, might take their seats beneath us in the orchestra, and, after proclamation made, the mortmain of imperial Rome be laid upon the comforts, liberties, and little gracefulnesses of our modern life. Nor is it unpleasant to be startled from such reverie by the voice of the old guardian upon the stage beneath, sonorously devolving the vacuous Alexandrines with which he once welcomed his ephemeral French Emperor from Algiers. The little man is dim with distance, eclipsed and swallowed up by the shadows and grotesque fragments of the ruin in the midst of which he stands. But his voice—thanks to the inimitable constructive art of the ancient architect, which, even in the desolation of at least thirteen centuries, has not lost its cunning,—emerges from the pigmy throat, and fills the whole vast hollow with its clear, if tiny, sound. Thank heaven, there is no danger of Roman resurrection here! The illusion is completely broken, and we turn to gather the first violets of February, and to wonder at the quaint postures of a praying mantis on the grass-grown tiers and porches fringed with fern.

The sense of Roman greatness which is so oppressive in Orange and in many other parts of Provence is not felt at Avignon. Here we exchange

the ghost of Imperial for the phantom of Ecclesiastical Rome. The fixed epithet of Avignon is Papal; and as the express train rushes over its bleak and wind-tormented plain, the heavy dungeon walls and battlemented towers of its palace fortress seem to warn us off, and bid us quickly leave the Babylon of exiled impious Antichrist. Avignon, indeed, presents the bleakest, barest, greyest scene upon a February morning, when the incessant mistral is blowing, and far and near, upon desolate hillside and sandy plain, the scanty trees are bent sideways, the crumbling castle turrets shiver like bleached skeletons in the dry ungenial air. Yet inside the town all is not so dreary. The Papal palace, with its terrible glacière, its chapel painted by Simone Mammi, its endless corridors and staircases, its torture chamber, funnel-shaped to drown and suffocate—so runs tradition—the shrieks of wretches on the rack, is now a barrack, filled with lively little French soldiers, whose politeness, though sorely taxed, is never ruffled by the introduction of inquisitive visitors into their dormitories, eating-places, and drill-grounds. And strange, indeed, it is to see the lines of neat, narrow barrack beds, between which the red-legged little men are shaving, polishing their guns, or mending their trousers, in those vaulted halls of Popes and Cardinals, these vast presence-chambers and audience-galleries, where Urban entertained St. Catherine, where Rienzi came, a prisoner, to be stared at. Pass by the glacière with a shudder, for it has still the reek of blood about it; and do not long delay in the cheerless dungeon of Rienzi. Time and regimental whitewash have swept these lurking-places of old crime very bare; but the parable of the seven devils is true in more senses than one, and the ghosts that return to haunt a deodorized, disinfected, garnished sepulchre are almost more ghastly than those which have never been disturbed from their old habitations.

Little by little the eye becomes accustomed to the bareness and grey-ness of this Provençal landscape; and then we find that the scenery round Avignon is eminently picturesque. The view from Les Doms—which is a hill above the Pope's palace, the Acropolis, as it were, of Avignon—embraces a wide stretch of undulating champaign, bordered by low hills, and intersected by the flashing waters of the majestic Rhone. Across the stream stands Villeneuve, like a castle of romance, with its round stone towers fronting the gates and battlemented walls of the Papal city. A bridge used to connect the two towns, but it is now broken. The remaining fragment is of solid build, resting on great buttresses, one of which rises fantastically above the bridge into a little chapel. Such, one might fancy, was the bridge which Ariosto's Rodomonte kept on horse against the Paladins of Charlemagne, when angered by the loss of his false love. Nor is it difficult to imagine Bradamante spurring up the slope against him with her magic lance in rest, and tilting him into the tawny waves beneath. On a clear October morning, when the vineyards are taking their last tints of gold and crimson, and the yellow foliage of the poplars by the river mingles with the sober greys of olive-trees and willows, every

square inch of this landscape, glittering as it does with light and with colour, the more beautiful for its subtlety and rarity, would make a picture. Out of many such vignettes let us choose one. We are on the shore close by the ruined bridge, the rolling muddy Rhone in front; beyond it, by the towing-path, a tall strong cypress-tree beside a little house, and next to it a crucifix twelve feet or more in height, the Christ visible afar, stretched upon his red cross; arundo donax all around, and willows near; behind, far off, the peaked hills, blue and pearled with clouds; past the cypress, on the Rhone, comes floating a long raft, swift through the stream, and ruddered by a score of men: one standing prow-erect bends forward to salute the cross; on flies the raft, the tall reeds rustle, and the cypress sleeps.

For those who have time to spare in going to or from the south it is worth while to spend a day or two in the most comfortable and characteristic of old French inns, the Hôtel de l'Europe, at Avignon. Should it rain, the museum of the town is worth a visit. It contains Horace Vernet's not uncelebrated picture of Mazeppa, and another, less famous, but perhaps more interesting, by swollen-checked David, the "genius in convulsion," as Carlyle has christened him. His canvas is unfinished: who knows what cry of the Convention made the painter fling his palette down and leave the masterpiece he might have spoiled? For in its way the picture is a masterpiece. There lies Jean Barrad, drummer, aged fourteen, slain in La Vendée, a true patriot, who, while his life-blood flowed away, pressed the tricolor cockade to his heart, and murmured liberty! David has treated his subject classically; the little drummer-boy, though French enough in feature and in feeling, lies, Greek-like, naked on the sand—a very Hyacinth of the Republic, La Vendée's Ilioneus. The tricolor cockade and the sentiment of upturned patriotic eyes are the only indications of his being a hero in his teens, a citizen who thought it sweet to die for France.

In fine weather a visit to Vaucluse should by no means be omitted, not so much, perhaps, for Petrarch's sake as for the interest of the drive, and for the marvel of the fountain of the Sorgues. A little one-horse phaeton will take you there and back, a distance in all of thirty-six miles, for twelve francs. For some time after leaving Avignon one jogs along the level country between avenues of plane-trees, then comes a hilly ridge, on which the olives, mulberries, and vineyards join their colours and melt subtly into distant purple. After crossing this, we reach L'Isle, an island village girdled by the gliding Sorgues, overshadowed with gigantic plane-boughs, and echoing to the plash of water dripped from mossy fern-tufted mill-wheels. Those who expect Petrarch's Sorgues to be some trickling poet's stream emerging from a damp grotto may well be astounded at the rush and roar of this azure river so close upon its fountain-head. It has a volume and arrow-like rapidity that fill one with the feeling of exuberance and life. In passing let it not be forgotten that it was somewhere or other in this "chiaro fondo di Sorga," as Carlyle describes, that Jourdain, the hangman-hero of

the Glacière, stuck fast upon his pony when flying from his foes, and had his accursed life, by some diabolical providence, spared for future butcheries. On we go across the austere plain, between fields of madder, the red roots of the "garance" lying in swathes along the furrows; in front of us rise ash-grey hills of barren rock, here and there crimsoned with the leaves of the dwarf sumach. A huge cliff stands up and seems to bar all passage. Yet the river foams in torrents at our side. Whence can it issue? What pass or cranny in that precipice is cloven for its escape? These questions grow in interest as we enter the narrow defile of limestone rocks, which lead to the cliff-barrier, and find ourselves among the figs and olives of Vaucluse. Here is the village, the little church, the ugly column to Petrarch's memory, the inn, with its caricatures of Laura, and its excellent trout, the bridge and the many-flashing, eddying Sorgues, lashed by mill-wheels, broken by weirs, divided in its course, channelled and dyked, yet flowing irresistibly and undefiled. Blue, purple, greened by moss and water-weeds, silvered by snow-white pebbles, on its pure smooth bed the river runs like elemental diamond, so clear and fresh. The rocks on either side are grey or yellow, terraced into olive-yards, with here and there a cypress, fig, or mulberry tree. Soon the gardens cease, and lentisk, rosemary, box, and ilex,—shrubs of Provence—with here and there a sumach out of reach, cling to the hard stone. And so at last we are brought face to face with the sheer impassable precipice. At its basement sleeps a pool, perfectly untroubled; a lakelet in which the sheltering rocks and nestling wild figs are glassed as in a mirror—a mirror of blue-black water, like amethyst or fluor-spar—so pure, so still, that where it laps the pebbles you can scarcely say where air begins and water ends. This, then, is Petrarch's "grotto;" this is the fountain of Vaucluse. Up from its deep reservoirs, from the mysterious basements of the mountain, wells the silent stream; pauseless and motionless it fills its urn; rises unruffled; glides until the brink is reached; then overflows, and foams, and dashes noisily, a cataract, among the boulders of the hills. Nothing at Vaucluse is more impressive than the contrast between the tranquil silence of the fountain and the roar of the released impetuous river. Here we realize the calm clear eyes of sculptured water-gods, their brimming urns, their gushing streams, the magic of the mountain-born and darkness-cradled flood. Or, again, looking up at the sheer steep cliff, 800 feet in height, and arching slightly roofwise, so that no rain falls upon the cavern of the pool, we seem to see the stroke of Neptune's trident, the hoof of Pegasus, the force of Moses' rod which cleft rocks and made waters gush forth in the desert. There is a strange fascination in the spot. As our eyes follow the white pebble which cleaves the surface and falls visibly until the veil of azure is too thick for sight to pierce, we feel as if some glamour were drawing us, like Hylas, to the hidden caves. At least we long to yield some prized and precious offering to the spring, to grace the nymph of Valchiusa with some pearl of price as token of our reverence and love.

Meanwhile nothing has been said about Petrarch, who himself said much about the spring, and complained against these very nymphs to whom we have in wish, at least, been scattering our jewels, that they broke his banks and swallowed up his gardens every spring. At Vaucluse Petrarch loved, and lived, and sang. He has made Vaucluse famous, and will never be forgotten there. But for our purpose the fountain is of more importance than the poet.

The change from Avignon to Nîmes is very trying to the latter place; for Nîmes is not picturesquely or historically interesting. It is a prosperous modern French town with two almost perfect Roman monuments—Les Arènes and the Maison Carrée. The amphitheatre is a complete oval, visible at one glance: its smooth white stone, even where it has not been restored, seems unimpaired by age, and Charles Martel's conflagration, when he burned the Saracen hornet's nest inside it, has only blackened the outer walls and arches venerably. Utility and perfect adaptation of means to ends form the beauty of Roman buildings. The science of construction, and large intelligence displayed in them; their strength, simplicity, solidity, and purpose, are their glory. Perhaps there is only one modern edifice—Palladio's Palazzo della Ragione, at Vicenza—which at all approaches the dignity and loftiness of Roman architecture; and this it does because of its absolute freedom from ornament, the vastness of its design, and the durability of its material. The temple, called the Maison Carrée, at Nîmes, is also very perfect, and comprehended at one glance. Light, graceful, airy, but rather thin and narrow, it reminds one of the Temple of Fortuna Virilis at Rome.

But if Nîmes itself is not picturesque, its environs contain the wonderful Pont du Gard. A two or three hours' drive takes one through a desolate country to the valley of the Gardon, where, suddenly, at a turn of the road, one comes upon the aqueduct. It is not within the scope of words to describe the impression produced by those vast arches, row above row, cutting the deep blue sky. The domed summer clouds sailing across them are comprehended in the gigantic span of their perfect semicircles, which seem rather to have been described by Miltonic compasses of Deity than by merely human mathematics. Yet, standing beneath one of the vaults and looking upward, one may read Roman numerals in order from I. to X., which prove their human origin well enough. Next to their strength, regularity, and magnitude, the most astonishing point about this triple tier of arches, piled one above the other to a height of 180 feet above a brawling stream between two barren hills, is their lightness. The arches are not thick; the causeway on the top is only broad enough for three men to walk abreast. So smooth and perpendicular are the supporting walls that scarcely a shrub or tuft of grass has grown upon the aqueduct in all these years. And yet the huge fabric is strengthened by no buttress, has needed no repair. This lightness of structure, combined with such prodigious durability, produces the strongest sense of science and self-reliant power in the men who designed it. None but

Romans could have built such a monument, and have set it in such a place—a wilderness of rock and rolling hill, scantily covered with low brushwood; and browsed over by a few sheep: for such a purpose, too, to supply Nemausus with pure water. The modern town does pretty well without its water; but here subsists the civilization of eighteen centuries past intact: the human labour yet remains, the measuring, contriving mind of man, shrinking from no obstacles, spanning the air, and in one edifice combining gigantic strength and perfect beauty. It is impossible not to echo Rousseau's words in such a place, and to say with him:—"Le retentissement de mes pas dans ces immenses voûtes me faisait croire entendre la forte voix de ceux qui les avaient bâties. Je me perdais comme un insecte dans cette immensité. Je sentais, tout en me faisant petit, je ne sais quoi qui m'élevait l'âme; et je me disais en soupirant: Que ne suis-je ne Romain!"

There is nothing at Arles which produces the same deep and indelible impression. Yet Arles is a far more interesting town than Nîmes, partly because of the Rhone delta which begins there, partly because of its ruinous antiquity, and partly also because of the strong local character of its population. The amphitheatre of Arles is vaster and more sublime in its desolation than the tidy theatre at Nîmes; the crypts, and dens, and subterranean passages suggest all manner of speculation as to the uses to which they may have been appropriated; while the broken galleries outside, intricate and black, and cavernous, like Piranesi's etchings of the "Carceri," present the wildest pictures of greatness in decay, fantastic dilapidation. The ruins of the smaller theatre, again, with their picturesque grouped fragments and their standing columns, might be sketched for a frontispiece to some dilettante work on classical antiquities. For the rest, perhaps the Aliscamps, or ancient Roman burial-ground, is the most interesting thing at Arles, not only because of Dante's celebrated lines in the canto of *Farinata*:—

Si come ad Arli ove 'l Rodano stagna,
Fanno i sepolcri tutto 'l loco varo;

but also because of the intrinsic picturesqueness of this avenue of sepulchres beneath green trees upon a long soft grassy field.

But as at Avignon and Nîmes, so also at Arles, one of the chief attractions of the place lies at a distance, and requires a special expedition. The road to Les Baux crosses a true Provençal desert, where one realizes the phrase—"Vieux comme les rochers de Provence,"—a wilderness of grey stone, here and there worn into cart tracks, and tufted with rosemary, box, lavender, and lentisk. On the way it passes by the Abbaye de Mount Majeur, a ruin of gigantic size, embracing all periods of architecture, where nothing seems to flourish now but henbane and the wild cucumber, or to breathe but a mumble-toothed and terrible old hag. The ruin stands above a desolate marsh, its vast Italian buildings of Palladian splendour looking more forlorn in their decay than the older and susterre

medieval towers which rise up proud and patient, and defiantly erect beneath the curse of time. When at length we reach what used to be the castle town of Les Baux, we find a naked mountain of yellow sandstone, worn away by nature into bastions and buttresses, and coigns of vantage, sculptured by ancient art into palaces and chapels, battlements and dungeons. Now art and nature are confounded in one ruin. Blocks of masonry lie cheek by jowl with masses of the rough-hewn rock: fallen cavern vaults are heaped round fragments of fan-shaped spandrel and clustered column shaft; the doors and windows of old pleasure rooms are hung with ivy and wild fig for tapestry; winding staircases start midway upon the cliff, and lead to vacancy. High overhead suspended in mid air hang chambers—lady's bower or poet's singing room—now inaccessible, the haunt of hawks and swallows. Within this rocky honeycomb,—“*cette ville en monolithe*,” as it has been aptly called, for it is literally scooped out of one mountain block,—live about two hundred poor people, foddering their wretched goats at carved piscina and stately sideboards, erecting mud-beplastered hovels in the halls of feudal princes. Murray is wrong in calling the place a medieval town in its original state, for anything more purely ruinous, more like a decayed old cheese, cannot possibly be conceived. The living only inhabit the tombs of the dead. At the end of the last century, when revolutionary effervescence was beginning to ferment, the people of Arles swept all its feudality away, defacing the very arms upon the town gate, and trampling the palace towers to dust.

The castle looks out across a vast extent of plain over Arles, the stagnant Rhone, the Camargue, and the salt pools of the lingering sea. In old days it was the eyry of an eagle race called Seigneurs of Les Baux; and whether they took their title from the rock, or whether, as genealogists would have it, they gave the name of Oriental Balthazar—their reputed ancestor, one of the Magi—to the rock itself, remains a mystery not greatly worth the solving.

Anyhow, here they lived and flourished, these feudal princes, bearing for their ensign a silver comet of sixteen rays upon a field of gules—theyself a comet race, baleful to the neighbouring lowlands, blazing with lurid splendour over wide tracts of country, a burning, raging, fiery-souled, swift-handed tribe, in whom a flame unquenchable glowed from son to sire through twice five hundred years, until in the sixteenth century it was burned out, and nothing remained but cinders—these broken ruins of their eyry, and some outworn and dusty titles. Very strange are the fate and history of these same titles: King of Arles, for instance, savouring of troubadour and high romance; Prince of Tarentum, smacking of old plays and Italian novels; Prince of Orange, which the Nassaus, through the Chálons, seized in all its emptiness long after the real principality had passed away, and came therewith to sit on England's throne.

The Les Baux in their heyday were patterns of feudal nobles. They warred incessantly with Counts of Provence, archbishops and burghers of Arles, Queens of Naples, Kings of Aragon; crusading, pillaging, betray-

ing, spending their substance on the sword and buying it again by deeds of valour or imperial acts of favour, tuning troubadour harps, presiding at courts of love—they filled a large page in the history of Southern France. The Les Baux were very superstitious. In the fulness of their prosperity they restricted the number of their dependent towns, or places *baussenques*, to seventy-nine, because these numbers in combination were thought to be of good omen to their house. Beral des Baux, Seigneur of Marseilles, was one day starting on a journey with his whole force to Avignon. He met an old woman herb-gathering at daybreak, and said—“Mother, hast thou seen a crow or other bird?” “Yea,” answered the crone, “on the trunk of a dead willow.” Beral counted upon his fingers the day of the year, and turned bridle. With troubadours of name and note they had dealings, but not always to their own advantage, as the following story testifies: When the Baux and Berengers were struggling for the countship of Provence, Raymond Berenger, by his wife’s counsel, went, attended by troubadours, to meet the Emperor Frederick at Milan. There he sued for the investiture and ratification of Provence. His troubadours sang and charmed Frederick; and there the Emperor, for the joy he had in them, wrote his celebrated lines beginning—

Plas mi cavalier Francez.

And when Berenger made his request he met with no refusal. Hearing thereof, the lords of Baux came down in wrath with a clangour of armed men. But music had already gained the day; and where the Phœbus of Provence had shone, the Æolus of storm-shaken Les Baux was powerless. Again, when Blacas, a knight of Provence, died, the great Sordello chaunted one of his most fiery hymns, bidding the princes of Christendom flock round and eat the heart of the dead lord. “Let Raubaude des Baux,” cries the bard, with a sarcasm that is clearly meant, but at this distance unintelligible, “take also a good piece, for she is fair and good and truly virtuous; let her keep it well who knows so well to husband her own weal.” But the poets were not always adverse to the house of Baux. Fouquet, the beautiful and gentle melodist whom Dante placed in Paradise, served Adelaisie, wife of Berald, with long service of unhappy love, and wrote upon her death “The Complaint of Berald des Baux for Adelaisie.” Guillaume de Cabestan loved Berangère des Baux, and was so loved by her that she gave him a philtre to drink, whereof he sickened and grew mad. Many more troubadours are cited as having frequented the castle of Les Baux, and among the members of the princely house were several poets.

Some of them were renowned for beauty. We hear of a Cécile, called *Passe Rose*, because of her exceeding loveliness; also of an unhappy François who, after passing eighteen years in prison, yet won the grace and love of Jean of Naples by his charms. But the real temper of this fierce tribe was not shown among troubadours, or in the courts of love and beauty. The stern and barren rock from which they sprang, and the comet of their scutcheon, are the true symbols of their nature. History records no end of their ravages and slaughters. It is a tedious catalogue

of blood—how one prince put to fire and sword the whole town of Courthezon ; how another was stabbed in prison by his wife ; how a third besieged the castle of his niece, and sought to undermine her chamber, knowing her the while to be in child-bed ; how a fourth was flayed alive outside the walls of Avignon. There is nothing terrible, splendid, and savage, belonging to feudal history, of which an example may not be found in the annals of Les Baux, as narrated by their chronicler, Jules Canonge.

However abrupt may seem the transition from these memories of the ancient nobles of Les Baux to mere matters of travel and picturesqueness, we cannot take leave of the old towns of Provence without a word about the Cathedrals of St. Trophime, at Arles, and of St. Gilles—a village on the border of the dreary flamingo-haunted Camargue. Both of these buildings have porches splendidly encrusted with sculptures, half-classical, half-mediæval, marking the transition from ancient to modern art. But that of St. Gilles is by far the richer and more elaborate. The whole façade of this church is one mass of intricate decoration ; Norman arches and carved lions, like those of Lombard architecture, mingling fantastically with Greek scrolls of fruit and flowers, with elegant Corinthian columns jutting out upon the church steps, and with the old conventional wave border that is called Etruscan in our modern jargon. From the midst of florid fret and foliage, lean mild faces of saints and madonnas ; symbols of evangelists with half-human, half-animal eyes and wings, are interwoven with the leafy bowers of cupids ; grave apostles stand erect beneath acanthus-wreaths that ought to crisp the forehead of a laughing Faun or Bacchus. And yet so full, exuberant, and deftly-chosen are these various elements, that there remains no sense of incongruity or discord. The Gothic spirit had much trouble to disentangle itself from Roman reminiscences ; and, fortunately for the picturesqueness of St. Gilles, it did not succeed. How strangely different is the result of this transition in the south from those severe and rigid forms which we call Romanesque in Germany and Normandy and England.

It is well before quitting Arles, to sit down for an hour or so in the cloisters and meditate among their exquisitely graceful interminglement of capital and column. The handsome maidens of the town come, as in Calderon's picture, to draw water and to gossip at the well. The sun moves slowly from the southern to the western wall ; and with his gradual progression, fresh tapestries of light and shadow fall upon the well-worn pavement.



LETTER AT THE PILOT'S.

Lettice Wisle.

CHAPTER IX.

THERE'S NO SMOKE, BUT THERE'S FIRE.



It is unnatural for a young girl to have no outlet for her thoughts, no one with whom she is intimate enough to feel sure of equal sympathy. Mrs. Wynyate's consolation took the form of remarks that "it was a cross, and she hoped that Lettice's soul would be the better of it." Delicate perplexities were not Job's forte, and his sympathy was chiefly shown by observing repeatedly "that there was many a better horse to be picked up about nor that young 'un." And since the scene concerning Everhard she felt cut off from her former unfailing refuge—her uncle Amyas: troubles look so different seen from above and when one is

in the thick of them, she thought "he could not understand her!" With that ingratitude which seems the necessary consequence of the absorbing interest of the present in the young, even in so mild a nature as Lettice's, the fact of his opposing her wishes had become the principal part of their relation to each other. The old time seemed swept away, and as if between them there was a great gulf fixed.

Amyas felt it keenly, but he was too reserved to complain or explain. Besides, there was nothing which admitted of explanation; it was simply that, for the time at least, the feeling between them which had been so much to both was gone, and there is no more doleful task than to search among the ashes of past enthusiasms and find no spark. To have faith is the only comfort in such cases—faith in the real good and true character of one friend, in that which underlies the clouds, and sharp hail, and bitter rain of complaint and misunderstanding, which shall pass away some time, though maybe for many not here, only when we shall see each other face to face, and shall know even as we are known. But the bitter moments of pain which the young so often inflict in their in-

tercourse with their elders are never understood or atoned for till they themselves feel the knife in their own hearts, and utter no cry; but life grows sadder, and there is an ache at their hearts, and outsiders wonder to see a person look ill and worn without any apparent reason of sickness or sorrow for the dismal change. Amyas said nothing, but his heavy burden seemed to grow heavier, and the light to have gone out of his life; while Lettice seemed as if she were wandering in a grey mist, half unconscious of what was doing and feeling outside. It is a strange sensation when all things around are absolutely the same, and it is only one's own perception of them which has changed. She had been looking at the world through rose-coloured spectacles, and now that the glasses had darkened, the same world had become to her dim and colourless.

One morning a week or two later, a man lounged into the "hall-place" as the family were sitting at dinner. He was a strong-built, athletic fellow, with a determined look, and a great shock of red hair; it was not exactly a disagreeable face, but the sudden changes of expression made it a very unreliable one.

"Why, Norton!" said Mrs. Wynyate, in by no means a pleased tone.

"Well, good folk, here I am at last, you see," said he, looking round with a rather awkward laugh at the company, whose welcome was certainly not a cordial one. "And this is Lettie, I suppose?" he went on, turning to his daughter, who had risen anxiously, and was looking at him in extreme wonder and dismay. "I think she might say a trifle to her father." Lettice came up to him with a puzzled, painful look in her face; he took hold of her, kissed her coldly, and said, "Why, you're grown out of all knowledge, child!"

"Like enough," observed Mrs. Wynyate: "you haven't seen her sin' she were a scrap of six."

"Well," replied he, "I can't say as the welcome I've got makes me anyways sorry I didn't come for it before. I've been out where there's icebergs, but they're a trifle warmer nor you. However, that's not my look-out. You wrote," he went on, turning to Mrs. Wynyate, "as I'd never paid for the girl's board, nor nothing."

"You didn't beg from him, mother?" cried Amyas, angrily. Every one seemed bent on assisting him in ways which he most disliked; and of all uncomfortable things, to be helped along a road where you do not wish to go, by means which you detest, is the worst.

She did not answer.

"Well, we won't say beg," said Norton Lisle; "there weren't no harm in what she wrote. That slip of a girl haven't a cost much to rear though, I'm thinking. Why, she looks as if she hadn't a drop of blood in her veins," he went on, with a sort of laugh, as he looked at her pale, anxious face. "However, I've a brought fifty pounds for it, whatsoever it is." And he threw a little roll of dirty notes on the table. "And now I shall be glad of the girl with me if you ain't. I'm going to set up housekeeping again, and she'll do for me; I've a took a brick and tile

yard, with a house on it convenient, and I want to get me a bit of a home again. How soon shall ye be ready for to come along wi' me, Lett ? "

"Do ye think I'll sell the girl in that fashion ? " cried Amyas, almost fiercely. "Take back yer money. Who's looked after her and cared for her all these years, and who's the best right to her now I'd like to know ? "

"I can't say as to that," answered Norton, angrily ; "but I take it the law o' the land is as a girl of (eighteen, is it, Lettie ?) must go with her father if he choose for to have her. But as for the money, you're noways bound to keep *that*," said he, in a vexed tone, stretching out his hand towards it, "and if you don't want it I do, and the girl too."

"Granny," entreated Lettice, pitifully, "keep it ; take it for my sake, if I'm to go ; let me think there's that little help coming in anyhow."

"I won't have ye touch it, mother," cried Amyas ; "how do I know how 'twas got ! "

"It wore got in as good traffic as yourn,—buying and selling merchandise,—I can tell ye, you that takes away other men's characters."

"There ain't much for to part with o' that anyhow," muttered Job.

"What ! you're the fool of the family still, are ye ? " said Norton, turning fiercely upon him. "What are you waiting for ? " he cried, looking at Lettice, who still lingered white and tearless. "I telled ye to go and get ready."

"Leave her till to-morrow, Norton," said Amyas, striving to be calm. "You don't expect her to go off at half-an-hour's notice i' this way ; sho can't get ready her things nor aught."

"I've a brought a cart and all ready now," said Norton, rather discontentedly.

"There's the miller been asking after ye not a week back," put in Job with considerable skill ; "he said he wondered he hadn't heerd anythink on yo sin' ye came from beyond seas."

"Well, I'll go down to he for the night, but the girl must be ready to-morrow. I can't wait any longer nor then by no means," said Norton at last, as he left the house. He had come intending to be friendly and condescending, and liberal with his money, and was a good deal annoyed at the tone in which he had been received.

That afternoon and evening poor Lettice moved about as if she had been in a dream, while she collected her little possessions and bade adieu to all her friends in and out of the farmyard, as if she had been going to the other end of the world. The whole household was in commotion ; Amyas said nothing to his mother, but went about dismally in silence, while Mrs. Wynyate got so far in doubting the wisdom of her interference against his express commands as to be very angry with Norton for obeying her summons.

"What on earth did he come here for, I can't think ; that weren't what I meant a bit," said she, in an angered tone.

"Ye may turn out a cow to the pasture, but ye can't tell to what hedge she'll bite," observed Job, sagely.

The next morning came, and with it Norton in his taxed-cart.

"That's a first-rate traveller," observed Job, scientifically passing his hand down the horse's leg as a way of putting its owner into better humour.

Norton smiled. "She'll go her ten mile i' the hour easy, if so be 'twere wanted. What, yer don't expect me to take that big box?" grumbled he, like his betters, over that everlasting bone of contention, women's luggage.

"Then you'll have to buy things for her," cried Mrs. Wynyate: "the girl can't go naked."

With a good deal of angry arguing, the box was at last allowed to be hoisted in.

"She won't be alone in the house where you're taking her?" said Amyas, anxiously.

"There's a very tidy woman there as I've got to see to things and do for me," replied he.

"Look, Norton," Amyas went on, with a sort of spasm at his throat: "you're one that fears neither God nor devil, but I do believe as you'd not dare to do aught that's wrong against the girl."

"I tell ye a hair o' her head shan't come to harm," cried he, evidently quite in earnest, to Amyas's great relief. "I'm a-goin' to set up again in England, and I want somebody for to keep house for me. What the devil mayn't a man have his own girl to live with him without all this fuss?"

There was quite a little crowd round the door—the blind Dannel, the deaf woman who did the "choores," Job, the peacock, the calves, and a great variety of other birds and beasts—to witness Lettice's departure. She did not speak, but fell on her uncle Amyas's neck, with a sort of remorse for the cold chill of the last days, and then kissed her grandmother with a warmth which surprised herself. There was a scowl on Norton's face as they drove away; but happening to catch sight of his daughter, looking very white and utterly miserable, he burst into a loud laugh.

"If the girl isn't frightened out of her wits! Look, child," he said, more kindly, "the devil isn't so black as he's painted. There's no love lost betwixt me and them at the Woodhouse, and they'll have telled ye no end o' stories about me?"

"No, they never did," said Lettice, growing bold in her defence of home.

"I ain't so bad as all that; you do as I bid ye, and we shall be comfortable enough. Yer mother and I never could hitch our horses together; she would have her own way, and so would I, so we never did gee; but if so be ye mind me, and are a good wench, I shan't harm ye. I'm a-takin' ye because I want ye to serve me, not for to do ye any hurt: so ye needn't be afraid, child."

Lettice's spirits somewhat revived as they drove on. Everything in life to her was new and strange, and as her fears went off, and the fresh air of the beautiful autumn day blew in her face, she could not help to a certain degree enjoying the adventure.

They drove on across a wild tract of forest-country, much in the same state as when the Red King hunted there: wide open heaths, succeeded by beautiful knolls, covered with gnarled old oaks, interspersed with hollies and thorn and moss-grown beech, among which the deer were trooping.

"They say 'twere better for to kill a man than a deer in the Red King's time," said Norton. "And here's the ford where Tyrrel's horse, as killed him and ran for it, were shod, and pays a fine to the King until this day; tho' small loss were he anyhow—that is, the Red King—if all tales be true."

From the higher ground glimpses of the blue sea, with a shining sail or two, were seen over the rich wooded slopes of hill, and the pale lilac hills of "the Island" in the far distance. They passed along solitary roads, wide uncultivated tracts, rich in beauty of colour and natural outline, now fast dying away before the straight hedgerow and the square bare field. Is civilization necessarily and essentially unpicturesque and unlovely?

They seemed to keep to the bypaths; but at that season of the year, on that dry gravelly soil, it is possible to drive over the greenward, tufted with fern and bilberries, in almost every direction. Occasionally Norton stopped to recall himself to an old acquaintance, and Lettice was a little amused as she gradually saw how both she and the brickyard were trotted out as a sign of settled life and extreme respectability in the eyes of the world.

At last he drove up to a little old wayside inn, so old that its very sign, "The Bugle,"* had lost its meaning, and had to be interpreted by the picture of an ox, which swung on the bough of an old oak and creaked in the wind. The host stood at the door, and greeted Norton as an old acquaintance.

"What are ye after now, Norton, I wonder? and who have ye got there?" said he, without taking his hands out of his pockets.

"I've a took that place down at the Puckspiece and the brickyard. I think I can make a good thing of it: I've got it for next to nothing. He were a great fool as built it and ruined hisself to death; but 'twill be very gain for me. And here's my daughter coming to keep house for me."

"Whew!" answered the man; "*that's* summat new. Why, the place is full of pucks and pixies, ghosts and goblins, they all says."

"Nayther ghost nor goblin will meddle with me or mine, I take it," said Norton, with a grin. "I've business here, and the horse must bait,"

* "Bugle, a wild ox, from 'Buculus.'"—*Johnson*. "Thy bugle eyeballs," ox-eyed.—*As You Like It*.

he went on, turning to his daughter, and making her get down. The house was full of rough, noisy men, and Lettice took refuge in a stuffy, dismal little unused parlour, hung with strange prints of gentlemen in blue coats and yellow breeches, making love to ladies with a whole forest of feathers growing out of the top of their heads. With an almost impossible pen, on the half of an old bill which she had got from the landlady, she was trying to scrawl a letter home. "If anybody was to take it to the Woodhouse, they'd give 'um a shilling willing," said she, earnestly, as they were starting again; the post was almost an unknown institution to her. Her father came up at the moment.

"Look, Lettie," said he, "you leave that alone. Don't you be bringing Amyas and the rest upon us yet. I don't know but the place mayn't suit me, and then it wouldn't be for long." And, though not unkindly, he took the letter away. "They call me 'Norton' this side the country, and so do you too," he explained to his daughter, as they drove on again.

The country grew barer, the trees died away, the road lay across a wide open heath, when they suddenly turned off to the left along a rough moorland track, up which Norton drove slowly, cursing the deep sandy ruts. The heather was brilliant in its purple bloom, the gorse was golden and smelt deliciously, but the day had grown grey, and a slight drizzling rain had come on. They reached at last a little settlement, six or seven houses dropped down as it were on the waste, round which were some frowsy ragged bits of inclosed land, and a long line of neglected, ruinous brick-sheds, backed by a strip of firwood behind. A little above them, on the side of the hill, was a large unfinished, abandoned house, roofed in, but with the great open windows, like eyeless sockets, staring out at the heath. There is something peculiarly dismal and depressing about the decay of an unfinished, unused dwelling: the ruins of the past are beautiful, and sad, and interesting, but the perishing away piecemeal of what has never served any human being, such an utter waste and miserable shortcoming of an intention, vexes one with its hopeless dreariness and weakness. Lettice's heart sank within her at the bare, forlorn look as they drove up to a low lean-to, containing the kitchen at one end, which had been made habitable. A lame man was standing among the sheds, with a spade in his hand and a pipe in his mouth, doing nothing; he came lounging up to them.

"Anything new about?" said Norton, flinging the reins to him.

"This ain't much the place for news: you don't come here for that," answered he, with a sort of grunt.

"Have ye found any better clay then yet?"

"We've got to the red marl, full o' Danes' blood," said he, with some disgust. The blood of their ancient enemies is still believed by the descendants of the West Saxons to be thus found.

"Why, they haven't boarded up them windows nor put in the casements!" observed Norton, without attending to him, as he looked up at the house.

"Carpenter busy, couldn't come," replied Tony, who used few superfluous words, as he walked off with the horse to a sort of stable built into the side of the hill.

"Here's my daughter come to stop with me, missis," said Norton to a decent work-a-day middle-aged woman, who came to the door wiping her hands, crinkled with washing, on her apron. She seemed surprised, and looked somewhat suspiciously at the new arrival; but it was a reliable face, and Lettice felt relieved.

"But la, child, where over are you to bide?" said the woman, gravely. "There's on'y the back-kitchen, where me and Tony sleeps, in all the house as is fit for a reremouse"* (a bat). She was evidently a little afraid of being ousted.

"She can sleep in the pantoney place easy," replied her father; "and I shall get in the casement to-day, and bide in the front room mysen. 'Tain't wintor: I ve had worse burrows nor that afore now; and, Lettie, you make yourself useful."

It was still early. All the afternoon he was hard at work on the window; he seemed able to turn his hand to anything, but to care for nothing long. He had no time for Lettice: Mrs. Edney did not seem to want her; and towards evening the girl, having arranged her own little concerns in a wretched dilapidated room, which had been hastily floored and boarded in, in the main part of the house, went out to see what the place was like without.

Behind the house was a little pine-wood, which stretched all along the slope of the hill. Under her feet was a bed of the dry needles, with the aromatic smell of the resin. The rain had ceased; the evening sun shone on the red trunks: the wind was sighing among the branches with a soft Æolian music, rising and falling, as if played by invisible hands; but under it all was a low thunderous dash and roar, which she could not make out. A few steps more brought her up to the edge of the sand-cliffs, with the great blue sea stretching out clear and bright at her feet. The first sight of the sea is always an event in one's sensations—it is so large, so wide, so bright, so open-airish, so unlike anything else; and to Lettice, brought up in the leafy, bowery, flowery land of the Woodhouse, it was more than usually striking—the space seemed illimitable of sea and sky together. She sat down, struck dumb, where she first caught sight of the shore. It was a calm evening: the waves came rippling up quietly one after the other. "Like as the waves make to the pebbled shore, so do our minutes hasten to their end." The white foam crawled up the shingly beach; she thought she never could be tired of watching it. She sat on till it was nearly night.

While she was away Mrs. Edney had discussed the position with her husband. "I can't see what call Norton has for to bring in that child, as if I wasn't yable for things."

"Why, you ain't but a stunpole, missis, after all's said. Don't ye

* "And war with rere mice for their leathern wings."—*Midsummer Night's Dream*.

see, when one and another axes questions o' he and how 'twere and all about it, he can tackle 'um up short wi' saying, 'Tidden queer, is it, anyhow, for a man to take a bargain for his work, and have his daughter to bide wi' him?' " And he returned to sit smoking and drinking grog with Norton, whom he seemed to know of old.

"I'm all in my dishabilles, quite in a caddle," said Mrs. Tony when Lettice returned. "Yo see Norton, when he gets back into these parts, he comes to Tony and says, 'You help take the brickyard wi' me, and yer missis to find for us.' And so 'twere, and we come up here in no time, and 'tis very ungain for me, but I wants nobody for to mend nor mar."

After which assertion of her principles, finding that her meek little guest had no desire whatever for the reins of office, she gradually became kind and patronizing.

"We've a knowed yer futher this ever so long," said she, when Lettice inquired—"sin' when yer mother were alive—ch, a sight o' years ago, and he's just come back, ye see, to the old country. What were yer mother like? Why, she were a nice, jolly " (in the sense of *jolie*) " young woman. You features her a good bit, but him and her was like cat and dog."

And this was all the information that Lettice was able to extract.

The next day, when she had finished helping Mrs. Edney in the house, she went off again and scrambled down a little steep "chine," where a small stream had worked a sort of cut in the yellow sandy cliff, and found herself on the shore. The day was bright and sunny; the blue sea, with the green and lilac and purple lights and shadows passing over it, lovely to watch, and the music of the waves to follow. It was perfectly solitary. There was nothing to be seen within the horns of the little bay, with its bright yellow sandy cliffs, rusted here and there with dark brown iron stains, but the broad flapping wings of a white gull, or a black cormorant swooping on its prey. There is an inexpressible charm in the dreamy music of the sea to a particular mood of mind: the change, the variety, and yet the ever-recurring roar is a sort of companionship which grows upon one day by day. It was hardly healthy, however, for a morbidly sensitive mind like Lettice's, which required the active work of life to prevent it from dwelling on its own interior sensations. Day after day she sat on the shingle, watching the waves striving to attain, hurrying up passionately to gain their object, and, just as they seemed to reach it, falling back again, the power of the impulsive rush once over—ever seeming to win only to lose again. "Poor things, I think I know how they feel," she said to herself.

She had often longed for the luxury of being alone, but the burden of her own sad thoughts seemed now to be harder to bear than when busy at work: as a man can carry a weight when moving, under which he would be almost crushed if he attempted to stand still. The very beauty made her solitude grow more bitter.

Her affections and conscience had been almost morbidly active, and now she seemed to have nothing to love, and hardly anything to do.

"A little knowledge" is so far a dangerous thing that we always pay for unequal development. Proportion is the grand secret of happiness; that our aims and objects should be, at least to a certain extent, within our means of attaining—a balance between the powers of thought and action.

CHAPTER X.

NOTRE DAME DE BON SECOURS.

THE days went on. Her father was not unkind, and seemed to be quite satisfied that she should do pretty much as she pleased. He came and went very irregularly, attending at first a good deal to the affairs of the brickyard, but he evidently soon tired of this, and was sometimes away for nights together. Even when he was at home her attentions seemed rather to bore him. "What can ye do for me, child?" he said, puzzled, when she proposed something timidly to him; "why, mend my clothes for me, to be sure."

Mrs. Edney was a taciturn, phlegmatic woman, very busy all day with her cooking, her washing, her baking, and her cleaning. Lettice rather liked her, but as she would a dumb beast.

A place is never said to be haunted without excellent cause, and generally richly deserves its reputation, and the Puckspiece had a character which was a treasure to its possessor: great flaring lights had been seen in its empty windows at unorthodox times; strange noises had been heard by belated travellers, and there was a general understanding that it was well to give it a wide berth.

"What queer noises there was all last night," said Lettice one day to Tony.

"Rats," answered he, sententiously.

"I don't think it could be rats," she said, timidly; "it sounded like pecking with a pick more, muffled like."

"Makes their burries in the hill, p'r'aps," observed Tony. "I wouldn't 'sturb 'em; makes 'em bite."

"Are they such big 'uns?" inquired she, anxiously; "it sounded like treads."

"They did say as the man who built this house cut his head off, and walks at night to look for't. Wouldn't look out when he comes, if I was you; they don't like it—not ghosts. Goes to the well, they says, and looks down it, to see whether it ain't there—that's his head. Don't ye go nigh the well."

Full-grown men have no idea of the perfect delirium of fright into which a young girl can be thrown. Tony rather liked the "little maid" who filled his pipe, mixed his grog, and did everything she could for him; but he had no scruple in telling all the stories he could remember or invent of ghosts, pixies who ha'nt the bogs and lead wanderers astray,

pucks after whom the place was called, and murders, till the girl's blood ran cold; and although in the daytime she did not altogether believe them, she spent the night in an agony of terror, hiding her head under the bedclothes. When the light returned her fears vanished, and she discovered all sorts of excellent reasons for the strange noises; but not the less, when the dark came back again, was she listening again in the utmost distress; and there was a peculiarly dreary moan of the wind among the pine-trees when a storm was near, which always seemed, for some reason or other, to make the ghosts or the rats more active.

Tony seemed to lead rather an idle life, stumbling about with his lame leg among the sheds, making an odd brick or two from time to time, or firing the kiln, his stolid weather-beaten face utterly impenetrable; but one night, as she was returning home from the shore, she came suddenly upon him stumping up the hill at a great rate with her father, and hardly knew him, he seemed so lively.

"Why don't they run the Dutchman up Ribstone Glen?" he was saying. "Great fools, don't they see if once they gets the scent here, it's all up with us?"

"Now see you, there they be at it again!" said Mrs. Tony, who heard him, with something of a sigh. "Men's so rampagious, they can't kip their hands out o' mischief. There ain't a bit o' harm in Norton; but he's like Mother Carey's chickens, never at rest, and biding nowhere. If they could but sew a bit—that's the men—'twould keep 'um quiet and do 'um no end o' good."

Mrs. Tony was pretty much of Pascal's opinion: "*Tout le malheur de l'homme vient de ne pas savoir se tenir sur une chaise.*"

A good many sailor-looking fellows came up from time to time to the house, but Norton evidently wished to keep it quiet. One evening, however, he had a sort of carouse, and told Lettice angrily to come in and serve them; but she looked so shy and frightened that his mood suddenly changed, and he burst out laughing, and said she only spoiled sport, and called Sally in her stead.

"Be ye goin' to 'The Chine?'" said Mrs. Tony, a day or two after, to her husband, who had taken his squoyle (a stick laden with lead) after dinner. Tony nodded his head; he wasted no breath in words. "The pilots was to bring me a pail, and the kettle's busted: maybe Edwin* could tinker he up; I can't get nothing here. I want Mary to send me some sugar, and a bit o' coarse grey thread and a darning-needle, and——"

"I can't mind all them stupid women's things," interrupted he.

"Shall I go," said Lettice, humbly, "and get 'um for ye?"

"Yes. Take the child, Tony; 'twill be a change for her," said the woman, kindly.

Tony warmed up a little out of his usual silence as they crossed the

* Names beginning with "Ed,"—Edmund, Edgar, Edwin, Edward, &c., are all Anglo-Saxon.

purple heath. He had a queer habit of standing still from time to time, and turning completely round, so as to command every part of the horizon. "They can take us afore a justice," said he, in explanation, "for lurking, waiting, or loitering wi'in five mile from the coast for to aid or help wi' run goods, and whip or keep us to hard labour for a month, and that's pretty justice, I take it!"

At length they reached "The Chine," a repetition of the "Bunny" at the Puckspiece on a larger scale, where the little river had broken for itself a valley on its road to the sea,—a tumbled sort of glen, with firwood and small grassy spaces, and about a dozen scattered cottages here and there, each in its own close and garden; a few boats were drawn up on the beach, fishing-tackle was hung out to dry, and a pilot-vessel was riding just off the mouth of the stream.

"There, that's ourn. We calls it 'Edney's Chine,' though that ain't its real name," said Tony, looking down on the place with some pride. "My father he died and left wo a bit o' land: we was to split it up among us. There was six brothers, four on us pilots, and ye see 'twas a deal to us to get a good sight o' the offing; so there we just drawed lots, and the eldest—that's Jesse, and he's the heddest on us, too—he got the best lot, nighest the sea—and the pilot-boat's hisn; and the next lot 'twere the youngest, Caleb, and the last were just me. And ye see, after a while, my leg he were well nigh crushed in a big storm; and 'tis so anguish in bad weather as I were obliged to give in, and had to bide at home (though, for all that, I can do a many things tarblish well, up and down). And the rest is fishers and such like. But eh, how they custom-house folk do worrit! We mayn't do this'n and we mayn't do that'n; there's nothing scarce left as a man may put his hand to. If a boat's more nor an inch and a quarter deep to a foot long, they may take her away, she's forfeit. They'll be measuring the nose o' one's face afore long, and cut that off if it ain't to their mind!"

Tony had become almost talkative, with the recollection of his wrongs. "Hey, you come out there!" he called out suddenly, as his quick look-out caught something moving among the furze and bramble-bushes, and a small boy, with beady, twinkling, black, mischievous eyes, came out rather unwillingly. "What a moucher* you are, David! Allays after them blackberries and pixie† pears! You take Norton's maid down to yer aunt Mary's: I want to go t'other road. I'll call for ye this evenin' for to fetch the pail," he went on, turning to the girl.

The boy by no means graciously obeyed. He did not go as he was bid, however, but turned down a steep place in the cliffs, where Lettice could hardly follow.

"Where's Norton to-day?" said he, condescendingly. "But I dessay you can't tell! Them people's here and there and everywhere and nowhere

* *Falstaff*.—"Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a moucher, and eat blackberries? a question not to be asked."

† *Rose-hips*.

like. *I know*," the imp went on. "And there's uncle Tony, as were found out 'fair-trading,' and were broke for pilot, and his boat took away, cut across the middle. He never telled ye that much, I'll be bound," said he with a grin. "Eh, there's a big jolly-fish washed ashore! There, you go across the stream and up to that little white house. That's where aunt Mary and we lives." And he ran off.

The stream found its way to the sea through a spit of sand; and Lettice, seeing no bridge, went lower and lower to a place where the water looked shallowest, considering whether she was intended to wade across, when she gradually felt herself sinking into a quicksand—sucked in, as it seemed to her, horribly. She called for help, and a tall sailor, striding down to the fishing-boat, came across the little river and dragged her out. "You're going up to Mary?" inquired he; and then, as if land and water were equally indifferent to him, without giving her time for an answer, he took her in his arms and carried her like a child to the other side.

"Isn't there a bridge?" said Lettice, blushing, and too much frightened to thank him. She had seen him a day or two before at the Puckspie^o.

"To be sure there is. What did that imp David mean to bring ye this gate? A pretty douse o' the ear I'll give him once I catches him! Mary spiles him so, because he's an orphan she says; but that's no reason to give him his own way like that. I seed ye hiding t'other day when I were up with yer father," said he, laughing. "There, that's the way round the sandy knowl to Jesse's—him's my brother, and there he stands atop o' his garden ground, wi' his telescope up to his eye. (Mary says by times she thinks 'twill grow there.) You tell her as I shall be up for summat t' eat once I've finished wi' the dingy."

The girl climbed up a flight of half steps cut in the steep sand-hill, and strengthened with staves, to the little house, "wattle and dab," half timber half mud, which stood in a garden edged with thrift and pebbles. A passion-flower with large yellow egg-like fruit hung over the door, and there was a myrtle growing mixed with rosemary in front. The vegetation is very southern on that coast.

"Well, my little maid," said the pilot, greeting her kindly, "and you're Norton's child? You're but a teary thing to come o' such a rough 'un as he." Then raising his glass again, "I thowt yon were a brig," said he, going on with his search; "but she ain't nothing o' the sort. I can't make her out at all." His face was like an eagle's: the nose was large and hooked, with a deep-set eye intent and keen, though the whole expression was mild and serious. Every atom of superfluous flesh seemed to have been blown away in his daily and nightly strife with wind and weather; and his hair and beard were shaggy and grizzled. As he spoke his wife came to the door.

"Bless us, child, how watchet ye are in the feet; and there ain't scarce a vaunk * o' fire left," she added, regretfully, as she took the girl into the

* "Funke," spark, German.

house and began to provide dry things for her. "What, it were Caleb as dragged ye out, I reckon?" The little room was exquisitely clean, bright with whitewash, and hung with queer treasures from beyond seas, strange fish and seaweed and gay-coloured shells; and as Lettice unfolded the long chapter of Mrs. Tony's requests, she looked curiously round.

"Them's things as grows in foreign parts," observed Mrs. Jesse, answering her eyes. "Curosities as is giv' to Jesse aboard the homeward-bound, from some outlandish place or 'nother."

"Master Tony said as he'd fetch the pail and me some time, but it mightn't be till late. May I stop here till he come?" said the girl, wistfully.

"Stop, child? yes, as long as ever ye like, and welcome; 'twill be more cheerfuller for ye than up at the Puckspiece," replied Mary, heartily.

She was a large, comely, prosperous-looking woman, and yet there were lines in her pleasant, handsome face which told that she had gone through sorrow, and knew how to help those who wanted it. In the little colony everybody was consin to everybody else, and she seemed to be "Aunt Mary" to them all, and to be ready with help for all wants and miseries, both of body and mind.

Lettice remained at the pilot's cottage for the rest of the afternoon, and found plenty to do "up and down," as she helped her new friend skilfully with her neat-handed little ways.

"Mother's out o' sugar," said one little messenger, "and would ye send her a pinch? she'll give it back agin"—an offer which is generally an ingenious way of getting rid of the burden of gratitude, and yet leaves one free to forget the repayment.

"Tommy's just crazy wi' the colic, and mother says could ye gi'e her a pinch of bishopswort, for to make some humwater?" said the next.

Mary was ready for all. Her husband, as the owner of a pilot-boat, and without children, was a very well-to-do man, and his wife was able as well as willing to help. "Notre dame de bon secours" she might have been called.

Lettice took to her greatly.

"You'll have time to take yer bite wi' us, child," said Mary, later on in the evening. "Yer supper's ready," she cried from the door to her husband, who was busy in the potato-beds.

"There's a nice few on 'em to-year, thank God for it," said the pilot, raising himself and uncovering his head reverently as he came up from the garden.

A few minutes after Caleb appeared, with a colour-pot in his hand.

"Well, I've a painted the boat just beautiful!" said he with much satisfaction as he sat down to the table.

"I wish as ye hadn't a painted yer hands so well likewise," replied Mary. "Lettie, you find up that bit o' soap as I set by but now."

"Well, captains must be minded aboard their own ships I suppose,"

replied he, making a wry face as he did as he was bid. "What, is that little 'un here still? and all one, too, as if she were at home, one mid say."

"She's a helpful little lass and well brought up for work, I will say that for her."

"So you've been a-making o' the boat pea-green," observed Jesse, laughing.

"It don't scarce cost more to make her a pretty nor an ugly one; and I don't see why we shouldn't have it one as t'other if so be it ain't inconvenient. Didn't I catch that there David a-droving his fingers all along the wet paint! If yer don't see to that boy, Mary, he'll come to the bad. It was his doing leading that little lass into the quag but now."

"She didn't tell me that," said Mrs. Jesse, turning affectionately to the girl. "I'll thwack him when he comes in."

"Big words and little deeds," answered Caleb; "that's just women all over. They thinks as the world's a kep' going by talk!"

"Well, and so most on it is. They're powerful things is words, for good and for bad too. What's that David says on 'um, as Jesse roods by whiles?"

"Well, if it's the number on 'um will serve, there's a power on 'um as every woman can bring about everythink and nothink," replied he.

Caleb don't think much o' womenfolk," said Mary, turning laughing to Lettice; "he's allays the ill word for us."

The girl smiled absently; the sailor's opinion was very indifferent to her.

"And there's one as doesn't much mind which way he takes 'um, sims to me," said Jesse, with a quiet smile.

"She's a child, as slips into quags and can't get out, not a woman: so it don't sinnify how she thinks," retorted Caleb.

"I'm eighteen," said Lettice, with some majesty.

"And I'm nighabouts twice eighteen, so it stands to reason I'm more wiselike and purposelike to know about things nor you, I take it."

"Some things p'r'aps, not all," answered Lettice, shortly.

"There's a back-hander for you, Master Caleb," observed Mary, rather pleased at his rebuff.

"I didn't mean it," replied Lettice, blushing. "I on'y meant as there's some women as talks and some as don't, and likewise wi' menfolk: and a woman maybe best understands what's the ways of a woman."

"'Tis a very shalla sea most times, and full of shoals and sunken rocks, is women's tempers, and not much worth understanding," said Caleb, scornfully; "'tis best to kip out o' such navigation."

"They wouldn't have ye—sour grapes," observed Mary!

"Wouldn't they, though?" said the sailor, with a merry twinkle in his eye, as he looked up from his supper.

"Are ye goin' wi' me to-night or are you not, Caleb? we shan't niver be off if ye begin quarrelling like that; and there's that rope I lent Edwin to be fotch," said his brother, with his grave smile.

The young man went off. The sound of the knives and forks seemed to bring up David; for he ran in at one door as Caleb went out at the other. His prophecy as to any punishment of David's misdeeds came true.

"Thou wast a bad little lad," was all that Mary said to him. "What didst thou serve Lettice like that for?"

"Why, what a silly she were not to know a quicksand when she seed it," said the undaunted urchin. "It weren't my fault."

"And thou'st as ragged as a colt pixie, I declare, child," said Mary, catching hold of him and mourning over his torn jacket. The pixies are (or were, for draining seems as fatal to their existence as to rushes,) in the habit of luring men into bogs in the form of a ragged colt, and then vanishing.

"Let me mend it," said Lettice, eagerly taking it up.

"You'll have for to buy me some fustian for to make him another, this'n got so bad, next time you goes over to the Island," said Mary to her husband, rather dolefully.

"How nigh it looks to-day—one can see the cliffs quite plain," observed Lettice; stitching away as she stood by Jesse, who was hard at work on an old lanthorn, and looking over the Solent to the high land towards Freshwater and the Needles.

"'Twere a long way for Sir Bevis* to ride over every artemnoon, though," observed the boy, with his mouth full. "I wonder where 'twere exact as he done it?"

"Ride over the water!" asked Lettice, opening her great eyes. "Who were he, and how ever did he do such a thing?"

"Don't ye know *that*?" replied he. "To be sure! There's his figure, and the giant's as he killed, and his wife Joeeyan the Bright, over the Bar Gate at Hampton, like as when they was living."

"But how ever did he get across?" said Lettice, with breathless interest.

"I take it 'twere dry land then," observed Jesse. "'Tain't but a smallish way from Hurst Castle to the Island, and there's big shoals enow betwixt and between them changing shingles. 'Tis a vory narrer channel as we has to pilot 'um through. He might ha' cut across easy. 'Twere on the great horse Arundel." (Probably some pre-historic legend of the time before the inroad of the Solent took place.)

"And I sometimes wish as Bevis could ride over now," sighed his wife.

"There wouldn't be much piloting wanted then, and thou wouldn't like my occupation gone," replied Jesse, smiling: "and so I must be off. I shall be back when it please God."

His wife followed him, filling a bottle with the mead still common in the country—the favourite drink of gods and heroes when England was "the

* "And Bevis of Southampton, who killed Ascapart."—*Henry VI.*

honey island," and putting up the provisions which she had got ready. She stood for a moment shading her eyes with her hand, looking after him as he went calmly down the hill, and gave a sigh as she came back into the room.

"What a dreadful deal of lonely watching ye must have, 'aunt Mary,'" said Lettice—falling into the habit of the community, and using the word as if it were a title of honour—"all them nights when he doesn't come home, and when there's winds and tempest."

"Storm and sunshine fulfilling His word," murmured Mrs. Edney to herself.

"Summer and winter, Tony says, when he passes, as your light isn't dowed most part of the night."

Mrs. Josse sighed. "I get so restless lying there waiting, and 'tis cheerfuller to sit wi' a bit o' fire or light. Eh! them nights," said the poor woman, after a long pause, "with a gale sometimes fit to blow the nose off of one's face, and a mile out at sea perhaps all ye love in the world, battling for their lives wi' the cruel sea, and ye can't do nothing. Them times one lives a many years in a night as one lies and prays. One while," said she—looking out before her as if she heard and saw nothing but her own recollections—"the wind had roared and beat so again the house, I'd been sitting up best part o' the night, and had just laid me down a bit when the light went out sudden—it must have been a fetch* candle, it must—and something seemed to take me like for to get up, and I went to the door, and in the grey o' the mornin' I looked out, and there were Jesse's cutter just come in, and they'd beached the boat, and was a-liftin' out a dead body. I see it now," she said, with a shiver, "arms and legs a' hanging down loose: 'twas too dim to see who 'twere, and I couldn't stir to go nigh 'um, but just waited upo' the door-sill, like as my very soul were dead, for to know which it would be—husband, or son, or any of the brothers; and it seemed so cruel 'or to pray as it might be some other woman as was to have her heart broke; and then to see it were my own lad as were brought in with his feet foremost into his home. Eh, child, them words in that Scriptur, 'and he was the only son of his mother,' has more heartbreak in 'um nor any one can speak. But ye know," added the poor woman with a quivering sigh, "I ought to be thanking God A'mighty as the rest of the verse ain't true for me,—and she were a widder.' And such a mercy, too, ye know, as he weren't lost." †

"Lost?" repeated Lettice, somewhat puzzled.

"Yes, as his body were brought ashore, ye know; and now he lies dry and comfable in the grave-yard at Denehead, where Jesse and I shall come alongside of him, please God, some time."

* The light goes out when a soul departs.

† There is a curious horror at the corpse being lost. The extreme care for the preservation of the body seems common to all early faiths. Probably, the soul could not find its own again at the last if the members were dispersed by the ocean.

"How old were he?" said Lettice, after a long pause.

"Just about same as ye said ye were. And Caleb he were so kind and feelin' for me, just one as if I'd a been his own mother, for all he makes jokes like that; and were like a son to Jesse, he's so much younger, ye see; he's part owner wi' one of the other brothers in a fishing-boat, but he goes wi' Jesse a deal of his time. 'Tis strange too," said Mrs. Jesse, after a pause, apologizing to herself for her sudden confidence in the girl, "how you and me sits cosing on here as if I'd a know'd you all my life. I can't tell how 'tis, but with some folk one comes together so nateral as if it had been allays so; and there's other some as you may live cheek by jowl wi' for years, and never a bit nearer. To-morrow's the Sabbath day: you come down, child, and go to chapel with me,—sure they can spare ye,—and then ye can have yer dinner wi' me and David. Jesse won't be back this ever so long," she ended, as Tony summoned the girl and the pail loudly from the foot of the steps.

CHAPTER XI.

TROUBLES AND SYMPATHY.

THERE was no objection made by any one at the Puckspiece on the following morning to Lettice going to join Mary; indeed, Norton, when he heard of it, observed to his crony Tony, as, with his hands in his pockets, he watched her setting off from the Puckspiece—

"I'm main glad she've a took that way; religion's a fine thing for the women: keeps 'um out o' mischief rarely."

In outlying hamlets and secluded places like Edney's Chine there was hardly any religious instruction possible in those days, except through the Methodists; the Church did not even attempt to reach them, and there would scarcely in some parts have been a semblance of Christianity without their help. The square red little Bethel stood at the head of the glen, hideous in its outward form and presentment, and in the vehement gesticulation and ranting of the worship within; but the self-sacrifice which had been required to build it, the earnest desire after a nearer communion with God which it represented, were as holy and beautiful as that which had raised the magnificent minster in the cathedral town of the county, if only we could see through the covering under which they were worshipping God to the best of their knowledge and ability. But we are slaves to beauty of form: it is a good deal of trouble to find out the substance underneath, and we don't like trouble.

Lettice had been used to rather a more orderly and educated style of worship, and Mary saw it in her face though she had not spoken.

"'Tain't nothing like when Jesse isn't there," said she, almost apologetically. "He most time preaches when he's at home. La, Russell ain't nothing to him; but our prayers goes up to God A'mighty and He hears 'um howsoever they be said: 'tain't the words as he looks to, and

ourn be but stammerin' lips at the best on 'um," she went on, as they passed along a winding path through the holly and dwarf oak which clothed the banks of the little chine. A rough slatternly woman standing at the door of her cottage on the other side the river called out some loud unintelligible greeting as they passed.

"She and I had had words once before *that* time," said Mrs. Jesse, musing as she went. "She ballaragged me sorely, but she sent up a bit o' lad's-love (southernwood) and some 'fair-maids' (snowdrops) for to lay upon his coffin, and I've never forgot it to her," she ended, with a sigh.

They reached the house and she began her preparations for dinner. As the heavy lump of suet-dumpling with a few plums stuck in it came tumbling out of the pot,—

"Figgid pudding!" cried David, with great glee. "Give I some. I'se main glad!" and he clapped his hands.

"Now, David, I won't have you so taffety" (dainty). "You don't see Lettie squealin' and squallin' after her vittles like that."

"Nay, but she ain't so nippy as I be," answered the incorrigible Davy.

As long as that worthy was present he monopolized conversation; but after dinner he was safely disposed of in a sandy hole near the house, with a new puppy which Caleb had given him, and which led a hard life of it.

"He worships (fondles) him so as he'll half kill the little beast," said Mrs. Jesse, as she followed Lettice out on the little terrace in front of the house. The girl was sitting on the low bench looking listlessly out on the blue sea and the bright cliffs of the Island; everything was still—the "Sabbath" stillness—and lovely with the peculiar beauty of an autumn day—"as if it could not be, as if it had not been"—which Shelley describes. The tiny waves which rippled to the shore and left no foam seemed only to make the quiet more sensible.

"What was ye thinking on, child?" said Mrs. Jesse, coming up to her, and laying her hand on her shoulder. Lettice looked up at the grave motherly face with its kind eyes, and her own filled with tears. She took hold of the woman's gown and hid her face in its folds as if she had been a child. Mrs. Jesse stroked the bright golden hair and was silent. "Is it anght that I can help, dearie?" said she at last.

"I care for somebody, and he cared for me," she said, amidst her tears; "and nobody isn't agreeable: his father and uncle Amyas and my grandmother: and my father don't mind much either way, but I know he'd be agin it. I've heard nought sin' I came here, and I don't know whether 'he' won't forget a' about it. Why shouldn't he? He don't even know where I am. And I'm so poor a thing, and life's so long; how ever shall I live through all them years till I'm old?" cried the poor child passionately. "Here's every day seems like a year—I wish I were dead."

Mrs. Edney sighed. "Grief don't kill the body, dearie, only just the heart out on ye, if thou doesn't mind. Thou'st but at beginning o' thy road, when the sun's low and casts great shadders, and everything looks so big: morning and evening's both alike for that: but there's a long day

afore thea, please God; and at noonday one's too throng to heed as much."

"But I don't want to forget, nor more than for he to do't."

"No, not to forget; it weren't not sent us to forget, but to use like. Sorrow's like yeast, I sometimes thinks," went on Mrs. Jesse. "If ye works it well in wi' your life it raises the bread, and sweetens the taste on it; but if ye just leave it there to ferment, it turns all things bitter, and the dough's altogether sad, and *that* batch is spiled anyhow."

"And I've got nought to do like."

"Nay, dearie," said Mary, shaking her head; "there's plenty work an ye'll do it."

"But such stupid work," answered Lettice: "sweepin' and cleanin', without a soul to speak to but Sally, as is more like a tappit hen nor aught else."

"Who sweeps a room as in His sight, makes that and the action fine," Mary would have said; but she had never heard of old Herbert, so her answer was more homely. "We can't only do the work as God has given us: if there's sweepin' to do, 'tis like as He means thee for to sweep; but there's lots o' sick and sorry folk, child, round every place. *They're* not wantin' nowhere, poor bodies."

"I wonder ought one to be comforted by other folk's griefs?" said Lettice, consideringly. "After you telled me yesterday o' yourn, I just went home and could ha' cried a' the way, it seemed as if mine weren't nought to what you'd a gone through, and as though I were so took up wi' myself as 'twere wicked; but it wouldn't do. My ache's my own, and nobody can't feel it but just me in my own heart, and nobody can't mend nor make there. Nobody knows the spirit o' man but the heart o' man that is in him."

Mrs. Jesse was more used to act philosophy than to talk it, and she was silent. "No," she said at last, "I don't see as it ought to comfort we for to know, bare like, as other folks is in sore straits as well as we; but I think 'tis God A'mighty's will, if ye can succour them as wants it, that somehow it eases yer own smart. I dunno what would ha' come to me that time I telled ye of the sorrow struck, but David's mother she were down in the faver after he were born, and nobody wouldn't a come nigh her; and only a little girl to tend her as died, and her own man out at sea for to get 'um a living; and I bided with her by night and by day, just coming home for an hour or two to find for Jesse. He were a right down good man for to let me go, he were. He might ha' caught the faver from me," said she, energetically; "but he telled me after, as he thowt the work kep' me alive, and were thankful for it. And after she died, he let me take the babby, that's David. It were a tewly thing, and sore trouble at night for to bring up, and Jesse were so patient when it mourned as never were." She paused, and looked out at the sea, as if she were trying to see him.

"There's a tale as Jesse tells—he's full o' his yarns is Jesse (I can't

tell it not as he do)—o' the building o' the minster at Maplesford. They wanted to have it at the top o' the hill where the people didn't dwell ; and whatsumdewer were put up in the day the angels pulled it down by night ; and the beams was too short, and the corner-stones wouldn't fit, till they give in and built it where 'tis now ; and when it came to evening there were ever one workman more as worked in the day and niver came up to pay time, which were Jesus Christ our Lord. And Jesse always said where we'd work to do accordin' to his word, there we'd find our Lord to give a hand to't, a-working with us both to will and to do. And it seemed to me ever as I went and come them nights as my beautiful Saviour were a-walking alongside of me up and down, and as He said, 'Peace, be still !' to the raging of my grief. And he'll do it to thee, too, Lettie, an thee astes it of Him."

Lettice did not answer. Resignation is not a plant that thrives in young soils ; making the best of what is seems more the virtue of the old, struggling to cure the evil the work of the young. "To suffer and be still" is the fruit of experience in pain—to do, to act, to try and throw off its sorrow by winning the goal is the instinct of the young ; and perhaps Providence may know best, after all, as it is He that has made them so, or the world would stand comparatively still and become an abode of quietists.

It was the first time that Lettice had ever had a woman friend. She could have no confidences with her grandmother, and in spite of her affection for her uncle, they were both too shy to come near a number of her perplexities ; while Mrs. Jesse seemed to have time and sympathy for everybody, and her work, of which she had plenty, to be always done quietly and quickly, so as to leave her at liberty for others, instead of the way in which Mrs. Wynyate was miserable if she herself and every one under her were not continually on the stir.

In our days there is an indissoluble connection between the ideas of cultivation and reading and writing ; it is now only the ignorant and stupid who cannot do both, and certain thoughts are never attained without those arts ; but fifty years ago, books, except in the highest education, were the exception, and very clever men and women thought out their own thoughts and fancies with extraordinarily little assistance from anything beyond the Testament. Even in the upper classes reading was not very common among women. "My grandmother could hardly spell when she wrote, and she read nothing but her *livre d'heures*," said a Frenchman, who was well able to judge ; "but she was far more witty and wise than women are now." There are other volumes in the world than written ones to be read ; life is a book which may well last one's whole time, but it requires a great deal of intelligence to understand its difficult pages.

CHAPTER XII.

TEASING AND QUIBBLING.

LETTICE clung to her new friend with a passionate affection. It was one of those earnest friendships which are so beautiful between women of different ages, where the young one contributes the interest of the future, with a very refreshing mixture of reverence and love, and the older one the living experience (which is not to be found except in the heart of man), and both are the happier and the better for the communion.

Mrs. Jesse had a great deal of work of different kinds for her own and other households, and Lettice was only too happy to help, and came down whenever she could be spared from the Puckspiece, which was pretty nearly every afternoon. She did not see much of either of the men. Jesse was generally out with the pilot-vessel, and Caleb, who oscillated between it and his own fishing-boat, was not often at home for many hours together. Lettice did not like him, and kept out of his way as much as possible. One day when she thought that she had watched him safely out of the house, she found Mrs. Jesse with a great heap of clothes before her, which he had just brought in.

"I washes and mends for him, ye know," said she. "I telled him t'other day as 'twere time to get him a wife, if so be he ever meant to; but he laughs and says, 'I never could see no sense in giving away half my vittles for to get the t'other half cooked;' and then he turns on me, grave like, and says, 'Sure, ain't you like a mother to me, Mary? and isn't that better nor ten wives?' 'Yes,' says I, 'lad, but not better nor one.' And with that he laughs again and goes off a-calling out, 'Let be, I'm satisfied wi' mine ye see as 'tis.'"

Lettice was silent.

"Ye don't like him, child, and 'tis quite as well. Some folk fancies one and some another," answered Mrs. Jesse, philosophically. "Caleb's a good 'un for all that. See thee, he brought me this here book one time, from no end o' way off. He's a beautiful book he is," continued she, taking out a large Bible. "I wraps he up choice, I do; and he's such good company, though I ain't quick at my letters, nor Jesse neither; but there, I reads a bit, and shuts my eyes, and then I gets at it again like, when he ain't at home."

"I wants sore to write home," said Lettice, after a pause; "uncle Amyas 'll be in no end o' trouble about me. I needn't say where I am if father don't wish it, but just to tell 'um as I'm well treated, and has found friends where I be. Couldn't the pilots put in the letter for me somewhere? I've a seed Master Jesse a-writin': could ye give me a papern-leaf?"

"There's Caleb will take it to Seaford most any time, and welcome," answered Mary heartily, as she gave the required materials, and Lettice slowly concocted the document.

"Seaford," said she, when she had finished her letter, "is that nigh here?"

"Not so very nigh by land, but by sea 'tain't such a journey neither; and they're often to and fro thereabouts piloting, or with the fishing-boats."

"That's where uncle Ned is with the Revenue officers," replied the girl thoughtfully, ("and most like Everhard too; I wonder what ever he's a-doin' of all these days," she added to herself.)

"Well, one on 'um shall put it in somewhere else; you'd best kip clear o' them gauger folk at the present, considerin' what yer father's always arter. Kin don't count for much wi' them o' the coastguard, I take it. I wish as David could write a bit like you," Mary went on, looking into the corner of the room where the child was after some ingenious mischief or other. "Couldn't you learn him his criss-cross* line? 'twould be very handy for no end o' things."

"I'm a-goin' to sea soon as I'm big enough, and I haven't time for sich stupid things, have I, Caleb?" he cried, as the sailor appeared at the open door; "and you'll take me to sea wi' yo come spring?"

"Will you put this letter for Lettie in somewhere when you're out wi' the boat, as it isn't Seaford?"

"Good now, and why not Seaford, if I may be so bold?" replied he coolly, as he put the letter into his pocket.

"Because she've a got a uncle as is in the Revenue there, and 'tis trimming unlucky 'tis, as things is."

"And 'tis very wrong o' her, that's all I can say," repeated Caleb, solemnly. "What right have she to have a uncle as is a gauger, and her father in the fair-trading? Why didn't she see to it afore now?"

"I'm sure I couldn't help it," Lettice began eagerly, defending herself; whereupon he burst out laughing, and she turned away with a blush.

"You've got some mar'ls in yer pocket for me, as I hear 'um shockling; and you let me walk up atop of you, as you does sometimes," cried David, eagerly assaulting the good-natured sailor, and rifling his pockets.

"Thank ye kindly, but I'm quite comfable here," replied Caleb, lazily sinking into Jesse's three-cornered seat; "and it's quite too low in this here room for sich pastime."

But David was not to be put off with any such subterfuges and excuses, and Caleb was presently dragged outside the door, where the boy climbed up him as up a mast.

"Come out, aunt Mary, and look at me; come out, Lettice, I say," shouted the young tyrant as he picked the grapes from the vine which trailed all over the roof of the cottage, and flung them at the girl, who was standing in the open doorway looking up at him, and knitting diligently at a pair of socks for his troublesome little feet.

"David, you're not to pluck the fruit; yer uncle won't like it," remonstrated Mary, vainly.

* The old Horn-book had a "Christ's Cross" at the beginning.

Sensible women sometimes make up for it by having a point where they are quite as foolish as their neighbours, and Mary was certainly no exception where David was concerned.

"There, now you're as big as the giant Ascapart, and it ain't fit such a tall man should be teach'd his letters by such a little 'un as Lettie. I wouldn't stand it if I was you," said Caleb, laughing, as he glanced down on the girl's upturned face.

"Whose a-spilin' o' that David now?" observed Mary, with a smile; "but I will have him learned, if Lettice will look to it. All them words upo' the ships, and jography, and such like as Jesse loves, would all come easy once he had his letters."

"Jography!" cried Caleb. "Why, he knows a deal more nor Lettie now! What's that o' the four quarters o' the world as the little sailor wi' the long nose in the collier's brig teach'd ye, David, that day I took ye to Seaford wi' me?"

"The four quarters o' the world," said David with great gravity, from his lofty position on Caleb's shoulders, "is Roussia, Proussia, Durham, and Shields."

"There, Lettie, ye didn't know that, I'll be bound," cried the sailor.

"It ain't quite the same in uncle Amyas's book," replied she, with some hesitation, never quite certain whether he was in jest or earnest.

"Then the book's wrong," answered Caleb, decisively; "the man come from Shields hisself, so he must know! Well, I'll see and carry the letter for you, Mary, and put it in,—at Seaford I think you said 'twere to be?" cried he, as he went away. "I won't forget."

"I'm glad he's gone," said Lettice, breathing freer. "He never gives over teasin' and stirrin' of me up when he's here."

"He's a bit spoiled in Caleb. I don't say no," answered Mary; "he've nobody to pleasure but just hisself; and the bit o' land's hissen as Edwin hires, and gives him house-room when he pleases, and a share in the fishing-boat belongs to he. (I hope they ain't a-leadin' him into mischief wi' all them trips nobody knows where, up and down the coast as they goes.) And then he knows he's as welcome as the day here any time, Jesse's so glad to have him, and me too, to bide here; but he sims more free-like to have his liberty at the t'other house p'r'aps. For all that Jesse don't say naught about it, Caleb knows pretty much what he thinks o' such goings on; and, after all's said and done, his own way 's what a young man loves better nor house and land. But he's a good 'un is Caleb for all that; he saved a man as was nigh drown'd at Seaford no longer nor two months back. It tore his best shirt almost to ribbins; and there he never brought it me but now! See you here what rents there be!"

Why I Live at Hyde Park.

My name is Demetri Chazzi-Georgi. Now that you know my name, I need not add that I am a Greek—a descendant of those noble beings to whom all of us owe our civilization, and a member of the Orthodox Church—the true church of Christ, handed down to us direct from the Apostles. *Demetri* is, what you call in English, my Christian name, and *Chazzi-Georgi* my surname; although in reality the latter is my father's Christian name, with the prefix of *Chazzi*, which was a handle to his name adopted by all those in Turkey who make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, be they Christians or Mussulmen. As a rule, we Greeks have no surnames,—and by-the-by, is not this one of the many proofs that we are true Greeks? What was Pericles's surname, or Aristotle's? We take our father's name, and our sons our own, and so on; but sometimes we do have surnames derived from trades pursued, or epithets characterizing the propensities of those that bear them. Thus a man known as a bully takes the name of *Zorbás*, a Turkish word signifying *bully*, and has it handed down to his posterity; a printer takes the name of *Basmatzí*; a devil-may-care sort of fellow takes the prefix of *Delli*, the Turkish for *mad*; as is the case with our historical names of Delligeorgi and Delliganni, and so on. I have said above that I am a Greek; but as we resemble our forefathers in most things, we resemble them in this also—that at the present day, as of yore, Greek from Greek differs; and when Greek meets Greek, unless their interests be identical, there is not invariably existing that kind brotherly feeling between them that the outer world may imagine. Now, we Greeks have been vegetating in this country for nearly forty years, and yet I dare say very few of you know that the Chiot, although Greeks, keep aloof from the other Greeks, and it is very rarely that they intermarry with the rest of their fellow-countrymen. But they are Greeks nevertheless, and, according to some people, as pure as the best of us; and I must say this further, that they are first-rate business people, and the best merchants in the world without exception. You will no doubt consider me extra candid when I tell you that I am *not* a Chiot, and, indeed, have often been snubbed by some of them in my career; but I do not envy them their beautiful island, although they claim Homer for their countryman. I was born and bred at Stagyrá, the birthplace of the illustrious Aristotle. It is now called Larigova, but I have no doubt that all its inhabitants are as pure Greeks as the contemporaries of the great philosopher.

My father was a *chansi*, or innkeeper, and realized a very fair competency by his business; indeed he was considered the richest man in the district; but jealous people used to hint that he owed his wealth to less

honest means than his ostensible pursuits of a chanzi ; and when later in life he made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, evil tongues said that he went thither with a view of obtaining absolution for his past crimes at the tomb of our Blessed Saviour, by means of bountiful offerings to the priests presiding over the Holy Sepulchre. The story went that my father was in the habit of seizing all rich travellers staying at his inn, and thrusting them in an oven which he constantly kept heated for the purpose ; indeed so prevalent was this story in our district, that as there happened to be another man of the name of Chazzi-Georgi in Larigova, my father was always called, by way of distinction, Chazzi-Georgi *Phonias*,—Chazzi-Georgi *the Murderer*.

Of course, all this was idle talk on the part of the ignorant bores of my native place. But be it true or false, I never had the chance of inheriting his money ; for before I was out of my teens, those cruel dogs the Turks, under the pretence that my poor father had been intriguing with the insurgents at Cassandra, seized and confiscated all his goods, hung him from the nearest tree as a traitor, and carried away to captivity my two beautiful sisters, Phané and Katerina, leaving my mother penniless and helpless with me and my eldest brother Nicolas. Nicolas, being of a quiet disposition, had been the favourite of Pappa Euthymios, our parish priest, who had now taken him under his protection and employed him as a kind of maid-of-all-work, instructing him during his leisure hours in writing, arithmetic, &c. ; on Sundays and feast-days he had to go to church at daybreak and call out *kyrie eleison* at the end of every paragraph of the liturgy intoned by Pappa Euthymios, and to read aloud in a kind of nasal twang the portion of the Epistles appropriate for the day. Thus my eldest brother was provided for, although not altogether to my mother's satisfaction ; as for some reason or other, unknown to me, she did not seem to entertain that reverence and respect for the priesthood that was the characteristic feature with all her fair neighbours. Our church service begins at daybreak ; we go to church fasting, and not after a substantial breakfast and at the convenient hour of 11 A.M., as it is the custom with you. We have no cushioned pews to sit in, or soft hassocks for our feet, and such other paraphernalia ; most of us have to stand during the entire service, and have to fare the same as the poorest communicants. Our priests wear long hair and long beards, as they are not allowed hair-cutting and shaving with the accompanying cosmetics. Who could feel any respect for a young B.A. just fresh from Oxford or Cambridge, with his hair parted down in the middle, his whiskers trimmed by Truefitt, and his delicate hands encased in lavender gloves of Jouvin's best quality ? I daresay you can find many faults in the Orthodox Church ; but with all the boasted simplicity of your worship, when I think of some of your dandy clergymen and your grand bishops in their spotless robes and their full sleeves and their splendid equipages, I cannot help thinking that they are much further removed from those famous fishermen, the noble pioneers of our religion, than our less cultivated but at the same time less stuck-

up pappas. Our priests are not allowed to marry; but married men can become priests, but if they were to lose their wives whilst priests they cannot marry again. But to return to my subject. As I was her pet son, my mother apprenticed me to the leading *bakâl*, or grocer, of our place. A *bakâl* is a kind of a miscellaneous dealer; he sells beans, salt-fish, oil, vinegar, wine, salt, sugar, cheese, olives, coffee, figs, lemons, eggs, writing-paper, ink, &c.; and as the trade requires great tact and acuteness in its pursuit, it is generally a Wallach who takes to that kind of business. I am not sufficiently acquainted with their ethnology to volunteer any information in the history of this peculiar race. The whole of European Turkey is overrun by them; they hold in the interior and in most agricultural districts the same position as the Israelites do in the centres of commerce; they are sharp business people, and they are superior to the Jews in this respect, that in the pursuit of gain they stick at nothing; they have no fear of God or mammon, and would as soon betray a priest as a robber. They speak the Wallachian language, but I have never heard that they had originally come from the other side of the Danube; and I can see very little affinity between them and the Wallachs of the Principalities.

My master, Yannoula, was a remarkably shrewd man, and a man of general information. Besides using false weights and measures, he had a peculiar dexterity in adulterating all his goods. In addition to this business, he was the local banker and money-lender, and had already acquired a good deal of property in the district; almost, I may say, against his will, as he was compelled to take vineyards and cottages from his victims, after he had fleeced them of everything else. He was in the habit of lending money at three and four per cent. per month on jewellery, gold coins, &c. Indeed, I have heard that an innocent Mussulman, who had borrowed 5,000 piastres of him, had to pay five per cent. interest per month in the winter, and eight per cent. in the summer: Yannoula explaining to the astonished Turk that as the days were much longer in the summer it was but fair that he should charge a higher rate. The good Mussulman, seeing that his friend Yannoula could not be responsible for the days being longer in summer, of course acquiesced without a murmur in this novel but equitable arrangement.

As some of my readers may be somewhat incredulous at my statement of my crafty master Yannoula lending money at such high rates even on gold coins, I may digress here a little for the purpose of informing them that the natives of Turkey, as a rule, are inordinately fond of jewels. The female peasants and their young children are literally covered with coins—gold, silver, or copper, according to the length of their purses; these they wear in strings like beads. In the towns the girls work night and day for the sake of saving up money to buy a diamond ring or a string of pearls; and hence one sees a greater display of jewels (real) in high society in Turkey than in Paris or London. And just as a Frenchwoman will too often go any lengths to obtain money for the

purpose of paying her dressmaker and milliner, the Levantine beauty will go through fire and water for the possession of jewels. Thus it is that you would often see them starving and begging bread and broken victuals rather than sell their jewels. On a Sunday or feast-day you will be astonished to see your quondam beggar decked in pearls and diamonds; it is only when they are hard pressed by a creditor that they would consent to borrow money on them, with a hope of redeeming them at some future but not far distant day. The Turks are, in addition, fond of having gold coins about them; and I have known a comparatively well-to-do Mussulman borrow money at twenty-five per cent. per annum, and deposit a bagful of gold coins which he would not change.

You can easily understand that I was peculiarly fortunate in receiving my early education under such favourable auspices; and I can assure you that in after years, when engrossed with business at Manchester and London, I often thought of my master, Yannoula, and tried to apply to my business the precepts I had received from him in my early days. Indeed, at this distance of time, I cannot help admiring his extraordinary capacity, and I feel more than certain that had he lived in these stirring times he would have made himself distinguished even in this great metropolis of financial schemers and crafty bubble-blowers.

About this period our neighbourhood was the head-quarters of the famous veteran robber Capitan Galenza. This worthy chieftain was at the head of a faithful and brave band of companions, numbering about fifty men. He was the terror of the province, but the Turkish authorities, according to their usual practice, pursued to this day, were perfectly unconcerned. Whenever an extraordinary murder or robbery was perpetrated, the pasha of the province would stir up our mudir a little, when this latter dignitary, accompanied by a good number of zapties, would mount his horse and make a tour of inspection, taking good care, however, to be always out of the reach of the robbers. During this inspection the poor peasants and their families would suffer greater wrongs and endure more insults and indignities at the hands of their quasi protectors than if their district had been overrun by the terrible Galenza and his myrmidons. The zapties, or Turkish police, are, as a rule, billeted on the peasants, have the best of everything for themselves and horses, and after regaling for a few days at the expense of these poor rayas—robbing them of their spare cash and insulting their women—they return to their quarters without having fired a shot, and amply laden with booty. Hence the robbers have many friends in every village, who provide them with food, ammunition, and the earliest information about the movements of the authorities; in addition to this they have their own special agents everywhere, who convey to them the earliest information whenever a fat customer is on the point of undertaking a journey. My master, Yannoula, in addition to his multifarious pursuits, had the advantage of being the secret agent of Capitan Galenza, at our village, and hence we were occasionally honoured with nocturnal visits by some of Galenza's brave com-

panions in arms, whenever the corps happened to be in our vicinity ; I was consequently thrown a great deal in their society, as I was obliged to wait on them on these occasions. Generally speaking, all robbers in European Turkey are Christians. They are very fond of wine, they are great gamblers, they dress in the Albanian costume, with short foustanelles ; they have long hair like women, and they are very fond of wearing jewels, and like their rifles, pistols, swords and belts inlaid with silver or gold. They are a brave, hardy, and often exceedingly handsome set of men. Some of them are married, their wives and children living peaceably and unmolested at their villages. They are extremely superstitious and devout, keeping all fasts very strictly ; they would not scruple putting to death an innocent traveller, or perpetrating some atrocious crime on a Wednesday or Friday, but on no circumstances would they commit the deadly sin of eating meat, cheese, or butter, on one of those days. Their tutelary goddess is the Holy Virgin, and they always make it a rule of setting apart most scrupulously one-tenth of their honest earnings for the benefit of *Panagia*. On great feast-days, such as Easter Sunday and Assumption Day, they are ready to run any risks to go to the nearest church and attend divine service, and kiss the picture of the Holy Virgin, and light a large taper in front of it. You would be astonished to see them for an hour at the time in a kneeling posture before the altar, looking as contrite and humble and harmless as if they passed all their days in prayer. On those occasions they take the sacrament ; and as we are all obliged to confess before partaking of the holy sacrament, I suppose they always do confess their sins beforehand and obtain absolution. We are all obliged to take the sacrament at least four times per annum ; but we have to prepare ourselves by fasting and prayer, abstaining the last three days from flesh, eggs, oil, and, in fact, eating nothing but rice boiled in water, and fruit and honey. The day before we take the sacrament we have to go to the pneumatiko (the father confessor), and confess all our sins, and receive absolution. Generally speaking people have to go to the confessor's house ; but occasionally the father confessor will go to the houses of rich people at an extra charge. One of our mildest punishments inflicted by our confessors, is to perform a certain number of genuflections morning and evening for forty days, and make a few offerings to the Church ; but of course all that depends on the nature of the crimes or offences committed.

Generally speaking, our robbers are very civil and kind to their captives, if these latter be rich and be expected to pay a good ransom. But should there be any delay in the payment of their ransom the conduct of these brave gentlemen is less praiseworthy ; and ultimately they do not scruple to perpetrate inhuman cruelties on the persons of their unfortunate victims : they have often been known to cut off an ear or a finger and send it in a letter to the relatives as a warning of what is in store for the unransomed captives. I am sorry to say that this state of things exists to the present day both in Turkey and Greece, and the

evil is rather on the increase, as the authorities, instead of taking steps to suppress the robbers, seem to be conniving at their depredations; and, I regret to say, that in Greece, through the rascality of some of our statesmen, the *clefies* are often made use of for electioneering and other political purposes. I am aware that it is unpleasant to speak disparagingly of one's own country; but I am a man of peace and hate bloodshed and violence, and therefore maintain that, unless robbery and piracy be put down, there is very little prospect for the development of our petty kingdom. And let me here give a friendly hint to those of my readers that are likely to visit Turkey or Greece. Should you have the misfortune to be captured by robbers, put on a cheerful face, and do not talk about what you are going to do to them through your ambassador or the local authorities; and, above all, do not set the authorities in motion, because as soon as the robbers hear that they are pursued on your account they will change their quarters at night and make you follow them on foot, at the point of their *yátagans* or big carving-knives; and in the end it may cost you your precious life. On the contrary, try and talk small; say that you are a clerk travelling on business, or a poor artist, and ask them to reduce the amount as much as possible; and if you have friends in the nearest town let them employ a competent agent, on a liberal commission, to go and treat with the robbers in person on your behalf: robbers are business people and will listen to reason. When you are set free, then you can go about claiming damages, &c. through the means of your ambassador or consul.

The hungry politicians of Athens find fault with our patriotism because we do not remove our families to Greece and spend our hard-earned sovereigns in our own country, and for the benefit of our fellow-countrymen. I yield to none of the Greeks in patriotism, but I should be sorry to retire from business and trust myself and my own within the territory of King George—God bless him and our little Constantine, our future Byzantine Emperor—before I am perfectly satisfied that I can feel as safe and secure as I now do at Hyde Park. Besides, if I am to confess my weakness, and that of most of my elderly fellow-countrymen in Great Britain, I have lived now so long in this country, and have acquired so many English home comforts, that I really do not think I should like to change my present quarters at this advanced period of my life. If my children hereafter should like to remove to the land of their ancestors they are free to do so at my death, but I very much fear the contrary. My two daughters, Elpis and Aspasia, and my son and heir, Aristoteles, having been born and brought up in this country, are more English than Greek in their manners and ideas. Indeed, having mixed a good deal with English families, they seem to me to look down upon their fellow-countrymen, especially those just fresh imported from Greece. I am giving you all this in strict confidence, but I have often observed with sorrow that my children very seldom like owning their nationality; they seem to detest their classical names, which they very seldom adopt, making use simply of

the initials ; and I am more than certain that when poor Madame Rachel comes out of prison she could make a little fortune out of my children alone if she could transform my Aristoteles so as to look like a handsome English guardsman, and my two daughters into two pretty blondes.

About this period a young Frank merchant, *i.e.* a certain Giovanni Belloni, passed through Larigova on his way to Mount Athos, for the purpose of loading a vessel with filberts ; and as he was in want of a servant I offered my services to him, and was forthwith taken into his service. I accompanied Signor Belloni to Kariés, where we remained about two months ; and previous to leaving the town I induced my new master to take me with him on his return to Smyrna. Signor Giovanni Belloni, although comparatively a young man, was a very sharp, cunning trader, and, I am afraid, not over scrupulous. Indeed, my experience of the Franks in the Levant is that, if one of them does turn out bad he surpasses the natives in cunning, duplicity, and depravity of every kind. I have known many, a great many, Franks in the Levant who have always been respected and honoured for their honest and straightforward character ; but, on the other hand, I have known a few who, like my worthy master, are a disgrace to human nature. This young Belloni surpassed Greek, Jew and Armenian in cunning and dishonesty, and outpaced the most brutal and depraved Turk in everything that is base and degrading. I assure you that, although I was a mere boy and with little experience of the world, I should have quitted his service in disgust had I not possessed sufficient sagacity to perceive that I had a very good chance of enriching myself at the expense of this demon in human form. For I must tell you that in proportion as he was sharp in his dealings with others he was the easy dupe of his numerous employes ; he was as easily robbed, and almost as fast, as he was enriching himself at the expense of the innocent people who were foolish enough to place any confidence in him. I will give you an instance of the way he managed his business when loading the vessel with filberts at Mount Athos :—The peasants who had sold the fruit to him had been obliged to hire a large number of horses and mules, at an expense amounting to about one-third of the value of their filberts, for the purpose of conveying them to the seashore. As soon as all the fruit had arrived and the peasants presented themselves for payment of the stipulated price, Signor Belloni refused to receive the fruit on the plea that it was not according to contract in quality ; and as he knew well enough that the poor peasants could not take the filberts back, and had no earthly chance of selling them on the spot, he told them that he could on no account receive them, and that he would forthwith protest, through his consul, for damages, as his vessel would have to leave the port empty. The poor helpless peasants were in despair ; but what could they possibly do ? they had no money to pay the carriers for bringing the filberts to the shore, and much less for having them carried back again ; they were consequently compelled to let my master have the fruit at his own price. It was most pitiable to hear the people crying and cursing—

they were utterly ruined. What did my sharp master care for their troubles? he did a clever stroke of business, and that was all he cared for. I often heard him repeat the story at Smyrna with great *gusto*. And yet this man considered himself a good and devout Christian. His father had abjured Catholicism, and had brought up his children in the Orthodox religion. Signor Giovanni Belloni was the strictest of the strict. He never passed a church without crossing himself in the true orthodox style, with his thumb and two fingers; he would say his prayers about five or six times in the twenty-four hours, either at his house or at his office in the presence of his clerks; he kept all fasts as strictly as the most devout monk at Mount Athos; he would kneel down and kiss the hand of a bishop in the most humble manner; but should the said bishop happen to be a debtor of his and rather in arrears, he would all of a sudden forget the respect due to his sacred office, and abuse him as if he had been the dirtiest chamâl or porter in the bazaars. I have seen him interrupt himself in the midst of his prayers to strike a servant-girl or a man-servant for having upset a chair or dropped a spoon. Whenever he happened to be indisposed, however slightly, he would sigh and moan as if he were on the point of death, and would call in priests without number to read prayers for his recovery; but no sooner he felt better than he would begin to joke with the pappas, and enter into conversation with them unfit for any respectable man to hear. He was the greatest coward and meanest creature I have ever come across, and at the same time the greatest tyrant and bully to his retainers. I have seen him repeatedly strike his female servants, young and old, in the most cowardly manner, and only desist when somebody would whisper to him that he was injuring his health by putting himself in such passions.

After I had been about three or four years in his service, my master became one of the principal men in Smyrna, noted as well for his wealth as for his dexterity in business and his total want of self-respect. A wealthy Turk bought the monopoly of salt, and Signor Belloni having become security for him for a consideration, I was appointed by my master, in conjunction with the Turk's cashier, Tussein Effendi, to superintend the selling of the salt, and see that the money went to my master's office. This business occupied me nearly two years, during which I was receiving no salary whatever from Signor Belloni, and as my friend and colleague, Tussein Effendi—a man with three wives and who knows how many children—was serving his own master on the same disinterested terms, we gradually came to the natural conclusion that our masters must have meant that we should draw our salaries out of the business. Henceforward, therefore, having signed a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, we divided equally and honourably everything that we could safely and conscientiously appropriate to our own use. At the end of the two years we were worth some 800,000 piastres each; but as all the burden of our defalcations fell entirely on Tussein Effendi's master, the latter found himself in the end indebted for a considerable sum to Signor Belloni, and had

to sell chefficks, houses, and jewels for the purpose of paying principal, interest, commission, &c. I was peculiarly fortunate in this transaction in a moral point of view; in fact, was agreeably surprised to find my father confessor so lenient with me. When I had communicated to him the process by which I had enriched myself at the expense of the Turk, the holy father said:—"My son, it is wrong to steal; but a Turk is an unbeliever, and a dog, and an enemy to our Holy Virgin: you do not commit a sin by doing evil to an unbeliever."

Finding myself now possessed of a fair capital to start business with on my own account, and having acquired sufficient experience in mercantile affairs during the five years I had been in Signor Giovanni Belloni's service, I wrote to my brother Nicolas to come over to Smyrna and bring our mother with him. We commenced business, in a small way, at the bazaar, as merchants in English goods and speculators in valonia, madder-roots, &c. In a short time our transactions increased considerably; and as I could now understand the advantage of being our own buyers, without the medium of a commission-merchant, I determined to proceed to England—a land unknown to me at the time—and establish myself there, whilst my brother Nicolas would remain at Smyrna, carrying on the business of the firm.

Previous to leaving Smyrna, I was married to a young lady of sixteen, with a dowry of fifty thousand piastres in money, clothes, and jewels. Before marrying, with us, we have to arrange about the dowry, and engagements are often broken off through the parties not coming to terms; and it is a rule with us never to marry unless all our sisters have been married and provided for. We have also to obtain permission of the bishop, who in some cases raises an objection on the plea of consanguinity, for the purpose of exacting a *bagsish*. In my case the archbishop raised an objection, although no relationship whatever could have possibly existed between me and my intended; but my brother being a Russian subject, we soon settled the difficulty through his consul. About six months after my marriage I had the misfortune to lose my poor mother. She was buried with all the pomp and ceremony money could command. I had the archbishop and fifteen priests and deacons in their robes to accompany the bier to the grave, all my friends and acquaintances following, each holding a long lighted wax-taper in his hand. Our custom is to dress up the dead in his best clothes, and put on a new pair of shoes; the hands and feet are tied; the body must lie facing the east, two long wax-tapers standing up alight at the head and feet, and a small picture of the Holy Virgin placed on the chest. All relations must call at the house and remain in there and taste no food of any kind until the body be buried. A cup full of wine is brought into the room, and they wash the hands and face of the corpse with the wine, and deposit the empty cup inside the waistcoat of the dead. As soon as the body is removed, a stone is placed on the floor where the body was lying, and a small cup full of wine, the stone and the cup remaining on the floor for three days and three nights;

with a wax-taper burning the whole time. When the body is lowered into the grave, the priest empties a large bottle full of wine. When a distinguished person dies, there is always a funeral oration recited at his tomb, a habit no doubt handed down to us from our noble ancestors. On their return from the cemetery, all the intimate friends and relatives return to the house and have a regular feast, consisting of all kinds of viands, except flesh, with plenty of wine and *raki*. Three days afterwards we have a quantity of cakes blessed by the priest in church, and distributed to all the friends and acquaintances of the deceased. Exactly three years after burial we proceed with the priests and relatives to the grave and disinter the dead; if the body be found perfectly decomposed, we collect the bones and transfer them to a monastery or a church, for which we pay a fee of fifty piastres; should, unfortunately, the body be found in good preservation, through our sins or those of the deceased, we replace the remains in the grave, and have prayers read in church for the remission of our sins and the decay of the body of our relative. Our bishops are buried in a sitting posture in an easy-chair, and a wax-taper burning; if, at the three years, on opening the tomb, the taper be found still burning, it is considered an infallible proof that the holy father had become a saint. When a Turk is buried, the priest, or *hózza*, puts in the grave a key and a copper coin; the key is for the purpose of opening the door of Paradise, and the coin for giving bagsish to the porter. The Christians in Turkey believe that three days after a Turk has been buried, he becomes a dog and walks out of his tomb; whilst they maintain that when a poor Jew is lowered into his grave, the earth throws up the corpse seven times, unwilling to receive in her bowels the body of such a wicked unbeliever; but that, after the seventh time, the body is deposited again, and a large stone placed on the top of the tomb. This is believed by the uneducated portion of my co-religionists, who also believe that every Easter the Jews steal a Christian boy, and make use of his blood for seasoning their unleavened bread.

I established myself at London and Manchester under the style of Chazzi-Georgi and Co.; and as I anticipated considerable bill transactions between my English and Smyrna firms, I was anxious that the latter establishment should not bear the same name as those in England; I had heard that English bankers and bill-discounters had a dislike for what they called "pig upon pork" bills. As my brother was a Russian, I thought it would be an advantage to have our Smyrna house in his name, under the style of Nicoloff and Co.; so that no one could imagine that the two firms were identical. We soon began to do a very profitable business; but as we had to pay cash for all our goods, our transactions were necessarily limited; for we were obliged to sell our goods at Smyrna on very long credit, although at most remunerative prices. At first it seemed to me quite a puzzle how my neighbours and fellow-countrymen could continue making such large shipments of goods as they were in the habit of making, paying hard cash for them, and yet trading with a very limited

capital of their own ; I was not long, however, in discovering the secret and adopting the system myself. I directed my brother to send me a quantity of his bills signed by the Smyrna firm in blank, and endorsed by one or two of his clerks in blank also—bankers are fond of many names to a bill. I now endeavoured to keep a very large balance at my banker's ; and having come to a friendly arrangement with two friends of mine of about equal standing with myself, we used to exchange acceptances by filling up the blank bills in stock, and then have them discounted at our bankers' or elsewhere, as it suited us best ; and by this simple and cheap process we were able to have a constant supply of cash for our business. I am divulging all this now, as these are matters of the past for me, and in which, I am thankful to say, I am not at all interested. Indeed, I consider them dangerous transactions ; for if one of the clique were to be in difficulties all the rest must follow in a string. But our trade is peculiar : we cannot draw on Turkey against shipments, as is the case with people trading with other parts of the world ; we are consequently obliged to make use of all the facilities in our power, whether quite *en règle* or not. About this period our business was profitable in the extreme, as there was very little competition at Manchester amongst my fellow-countrymen ; we were very few there, and the buyers in Turkey were not so thoroughly *au fait* with English goods as they are in these days. All twist, as you know, is made up in bundles of ten pounds each ; I was the first to conceive the grand idea of making it up in nine-pound bundles ; and as no one in the Levant ever thinks of weighing the twist, we did a large and profitable trade for more than two years, as we could undersell all our neighbours. Our prints were required in pieces of twenty-four yards each ; there again I used to have them folded in twenty-four folds, but in lengths of about twenty-one yards ; the natives had no idea of the proper length of the English yard, and by this arrangement we realized a large fortune without injuring anybody ; for, as your immortal Shakspeare says :

He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all.

But all those days of big profits are gone by now. We have since had such a swarm of hungry Greeks coming to this country, that one is disgusted with the business altogether ; and that is the principal reason that the best of us have gone quite out of the Levant trade. In addition to the loss of business, our name has suffered considerably of late through the malpractices of some of my countrymen, who, it seems, having heard by report of the successes of some of us in this country under exceptional circumstances, imagined that they had only to show themselves in England and they would not fail to realize large fortunes ; the result has been that one or two of them have been perpetrating all sorts of tricks and frauds, bringing their countrymen into disrepute, and ruining their hitherto unsullied credit. The Russian war, and the consequent suspension of our business, contributed a good deal also in affecting our credit. Before that

period, the mere name of the Stock Exchange was a horror to the Greek merchants; even its exact locality was unknown to us; and if a man had been known to speculate in the funds, he would have been scouted as the worst and most incorrigible of gamblers; but *nous avons changé tous cela*. The Crimean war brought a total stagnation to our business; and for want of having something to do, we were obliged to have recourse to the Stock Exchange; add to this that most of us not relishing the idea of being called Russian spies, as the English press was wont to insinuate at the time, we, of course, contributed our mite towards *bearing* the English funds. That was the beginning of the evil; subsequently the launching of Turkish loans, and, in later times, the limited liability mania, gave us a most unfortunate impetus; and, I am sorry to say, some of our best merchants have since been converted into inveterate dabblers in Stock Exchange operations; and to a man of good standing and respectability, like myself, it is not a pleasant sight to see some of the former stars in our commercial world hanging about Throgmorton Street and Capel Court, like that hungry and threadbare fraternity of the Jewish persuasion, and cosmopolite extraction, who seem to transact their little business in the open air with what are called the *outsiders* of that great but exclusive institution.

I attend very little to business now. I have founded and endowed a school at my native village, and contribute my mite from time to time for the support and encouragement of all patriotic undertakings, and mean to end my days peaceably in this country, surrounded by my loving family, and enjoying my *otium cum dignitate*.

History of the French Silk Trade.

THE Romans obtained their silk from India. It is well known what enormous sums Julius Cæsar spent to set up an awning of silk over the Circus during the games that he was giving there. A pound of silk was worth a pound of gold; and Aurelianus is reported to have said to the Empress his wife, who had asked him for a gown of this texture: "May the Gods forbid that I should give so much gold for so little thread!" Heliogabalus was the first Emperor who had the extravagance to clothe himself with such expensive material. He appeared one morning clad in silk from top to toe, and caused more scandal by this act than he could have done by any other of his numerous follies.

Towards the middle of the sixth century A.D. there arrived at Constantinople two Indian monks, bringing with them silk-worms. The Emperor Justinian encouraged their new trade, and bought for himself the first samples of their craft. He foresaw that the sale of silks might prove a fresh source of wealth to the country, and he did his best to establish a successful competition for his weavers with those of Persia and Hindustan.

The Crusades, by extending the relations of Italy, afforded to that country the means of setting up for itself some silk manufactures. It was towards the middle of the thirteenth century that the cultivation of the mulberry-tree was introduced into Sicily by the help of workmen brought over from Greece. Little by little the art of rearing silk-worms spread through the rest of Italy, through Spain, and lastly, through France. "And silk then became so common," says Mézerin in his chronicles, "that in the year 1847 as many as a thousand citizens of Genoa appeared clothed in silk in a public procession."

It was not, however, till close upon the end of the thirteenth century, that the Popes, who then resided at Avignon, introduced the weaving of silk into Provence, whence it spread into the neighbouring counties, but without perfecting itself. Louis XI. naturalized the art in France. He invited some workmen over from Italy; and, by the aid of these, Guillaume Brissonnet established at Lyons a small manufacture for the texture of silk stuffs mixed with gold and silver. By letters patent, dated from Orleans, December 28, 1466, the King formally recognized the institution; and, in order to give it fitting encouragement, decreed that a rate of two thousand silver pounds (about 850*l.*) should be yearly levied upon the inhabitants of Lyons, "to pay for the aforesaid looms, the master-workmen who will be employed, and the things indispensable to the dyers." His Majesty moreover exempted for a space of twelve years from all rates, duties, and

taxes all the workmen whose avocations were in any way connected with the silk trade.

Four years later, in 1470, a colony of Italian weavers settled at Tours, and founded there a manufacture which exists to this day. Finally, it was towards the end of this same century that the first mulberry-trees were planted in France. In 1802, one could still see at Allan, near Montélimart, in the department of the Drôme, the first of these trees that had grown up on French soil.

But, in spite of this apparent progress, and notwithstanding the immense demand for silks, the manufactures of France did not thrive. The most touchy patriots were forced to own that the textures woven in France were not comparable to the gold and silver cloths, the silks and the velvets of Genoa. French courtiers looked shabby, and felt so, in the tissues sold them by their fellow-countrymen. The price of French silks fell, the weavers began to starve, and the Lyons trade seemed on the fair way to a decline when Francis I. ascended the throne, and caused the state of things to change. The Valois monarch was a friend of art in every shape and form. He felt revolted at the idea that the French silk trade should be unable to hold its own with the Italian, and, finding that the privileges and immunities conferred by Louis XI. upon the weavers had been insufficient to give the desired stimulus to the Lyons manufactures, he resolved to increase those privileges, and hold out the most tempting baits in his power to the foreign silk-makers. An edict of December 2, 1536, confers upon this fortunate class a list of exemptions such as in these days would cause any country to be at once flooded by the tide of immigration. The silk-weavers were to pay no taxes, were to be lodged gratis, were to be non-amenable to imprisonment for debt, and were to be licensed to carry swords, a privilege which in those times appertained exclusively to those of gentle blood. Two Genoese, Stephen Turqueti and Barthelemy Nariz, allured by these attractive offers, set the example to their fellow-countrymen and came to Lyons. They speedily realised enormous fortunes. Their gains persuaded others to follow in their wake, and a perfect stream of Italians began to flow across the frontier. The talent and perseverance of the new comers, sustained by the patronage of successive Kings and Ministers, then caused the prosperity of the French trade to grow apace, so that before long the manufactures of France attained to that pitch of excellence and fame which has made them since unrivalled.

However, the manufactures of Genoa were still formidable rivals for those of France. The old established reputation and the continued excellence of the Italian silks were most disquieting to the weavers of Lyons. The word "protection" began to be murmured, and in 1580 a petition was addressed to the King, praying him to prohibit the importation of foreign silks, or at least to decree against them such a heavy duty as would make them cease to be dangerous to the French manufacturers. But it is curious to note how, even in those days of financial ignorance,

monopoly, and misrule, the benefits of free-trade seemed obvious to men of sense. Francis II., who was then king, answered resolutely that the only way of stimulating the French weavers to honest exertions was by admitting foreign competition ; that if the ports of France were closed to the importations of silk from Italy, the French public would be at the mercy of the Lyons weavers, who would then grow careless. " Besides," added he, by manner of conclusion, " it must not be said that the French, who are so superior to the Italians in the arts of war, are afraid to cope with them in the arts of peace."

This is a really remarkable answer for a monarch of those times, and we should like to commend it respectfully to the attentive consideration of certain economists both on this and the other side of the Channel, who, in the year of grace 1868, are still a few centuries behindhand in their notions on the subject of commerce.

In 1590, however, the Lyons weavers raised new and louder clamours for protection. But this time there was some excuse for their wailings. The religious wars that had devastated the country had made trade of every kind—save trade in swords—precarious. Noblemen were buying daggers, arquebuses, and rapiers, instead of purchasing silks. The girls were burying their gold ; and pageants, revelries, or festivals were things that had been shelved till quieter times. Catholics and Protestants, Guises and Montmorencys, were fain to cover their limbs with steel breast-plates and leather doublets. Women, even, had something else to think of than making up silk gowns. Henri IV. saw that if some energetic measures were not taken all the Lyons looms would be closed. He therefore decreed that foreign silks and tissues should be prohibited in France. But this measure, welcome as it was, did but little practical good. The authority of Henri IV. was not yet firmly enough established for a decree of his to be everywhere respected as law.

In 1600, on the advice of the famous Duke of Sully, the edict of prohibition was repealed. Peace had returned at last, and the intelligent Minister was devoting all his energies to the repairing of the disasters occasioned by the civil wars. The state of the different manufactures soon attracted his attention, and feeling, by intuition, what was good to do, this truly great man gave just the sort of help that was needed. He caused new plantations of mulberry-trees to be planted at Paris, Tours, Orleans, and in the province of Poitou. He, at the same time, caused large quantities of the grain of the valuable tree to be distributed throughout the country, together with little books that gave instruction as to how the planting and rearing were to be accomplished. Not content with this, he ordered a considerable number of French boys to be sent to Italy and apprenticed, at the expense of Government, to the silk-makers of that country. In course of time these boys (squads of whom continued to be sent each year) returned home as skilled workmen, rich in experience, and able to repay the sums that had been expended upon them, by improving the manufactures of their country, and so giving a new impetus to its trade.

But a last step remained to be taken before France could stand on a footing of equality with its silk-weaving rivals. Neither Lyons nor Tours had yet learned to manufacture those rich and gorgeous tissues in which gold and silver are blended with silk to form marvellous figurings and splendid designs. Italy and the East still had the monopoly of all those masterworks of texture that were used to adorn cathedrals, princely chapels, royal palaces, and the gala robes of kings. Sully sent for some Milanese workmen, who were especially famous in this branch of the art, but the establishment of their manufacture was not attended with success. It remained for an inhabitant of Lyons, a man named Claude Dagon, to endow his country with what was needed. The first French looms for "fashioned" silks (*i. e.* figured tissues) were set up in France in 1605. The first essays proved a failure; but Claude Dagon was a man of stout heart, and, after resolute perseverance and untiring work, he succeeded at last in attaining his object. In 1611 he presented to the municipality of Lyons a few samples of his new textures, and received two hundred silver pounds (about 20*l.*) as a reward. Twelve months later, on the occasion of new successes on his part, the town of Lyons voted him a pension of six thousand silver pounds a year, and a five-years' monopoly for the manufacture and sale of fashioned tissues.

The new loom inaugurated by Claude Dagon, was the *métier à la tire* or "throwing-loom." It caused a complete revolution in the Lyons silk trade and continued to be used until the beginning of the present century, when the improved loom of Jacquard superseded it. As always happens in things human, when one inventor springs up, a host of others make their appearance, and to a first reform succeeds a second, and then a third, and then a fourth. Numerous improvements in the different departments of weaving followed the introduction of the *métier à la tire*. In 1666, Antoine Bourget obtained letters patent from Louis XIV. for the privileged texture at Lyons, St. Etienne and St. Chamond, of crapes of the Boulogne fashion; and for the making of organzine (silk twisted into threads), the manufacture of which had already been attempted several times in France, but with ill-success. The privilege was to last fifteen years, and by the terms of his contract Antoine Bourget was to manufacture as much crape and organzine as was required in the whole kingdom, and to erect two thousand looms.

The method of giving an artificial gloss to the woven pieces had been invented three years previously to this, that is in 1663. The discovery of the method was due to pure hazard. Octavio Mey, a merchant of Lyons, being one day deep in meditation, mechanically put a small bunch of silk threads into his mouth and began to chew them. On taking them out again into his hand he was struck by the peculiar lustre they had acquired, and was not a little astonished to find that this lustre continued to adhere to the threads even after they had dried. He at once bethought him that there was a secret worth unravelling in this fact, and being a man of wits, he set himself to study the question. The result of his experiments was

the *procédé de lustrage*, or "glossing method." The manner of imparting the artificial gloss has, like all the other details of the weaving art, undergone certain changes in the course of years. At present it is done in this wise :—Two rollers, revolving on their axes, are set up at a few feet from the ground, and at about ten yards, in a straight line, from each other. Round the first of these rollers is wound the piece of silk of twenty, forty, or a hundred metres' length, as the case may be. Ten yards of the silk are then unwound and fixed by means of a brass rod in a groove on the second roller, care being taken to stretch the silk between the two cylinders as tightly as possible. A workman with a thin blade of metal in his hand daintily covers the uppermost side of the silk (that which will form the *inside* of the piece) with a coating of gum. On the floor under the outstretched silk is a small tramway upon which runs a sort of tender filled with glowing coals. As fast as one man covers the silk with gum, another works the tender up and down so as to dry the mucilage before it has had time to permeate the texture. This is a very delicate operation ; for if, on the one hand, the gum is allowed to run through the silk, or if, on the other, the coals are kept too long under one place, the piece is spoiled. In the first instance it would be stained beyond power of cleansing, and in the second it would be burned. None but trusty workmen are confided with this task ; and even with the most proved hands there is sometimes damage. When ten yards of the piece have been gummed and dried they are rolled round the second cylinder, and ten more are unwound. This is repeated till the end. But the silk, with its coating of dry gum, is then stiff to the touch and crackles like cream-laid note-paper when folded. To make it soft and pliant again, it is rolled anew some six or seven times under two different cylinders, one of which has been warmed by the introduction of hot coals inside, and this is sufficient to give it that bright, new look which we all so much admire in fresh silk.

During the first half of the reign of Louis XIV. the Lyons trade rose to the acmé of its prosperity. The fastuous luxury of the monarch's court, the prodigality of the nobles, the continued recurrence of state pageants, festivities, and masquerades ; but, above all, the determined encouragements given to the silk manufacturers by the able Minister, Colbert, all this contributed to place the French silk-weavers in a position of manifest superiority to those of any other nation. The brilliant days of Italy were past : the Medicis were dead, and the country over which they had spread the influence of their powerful, art-fostering rule, was already what Metternich called it in 1815,—“a mere geographical expression.” The Italians had neither wealthy sovereigns to patronize the silk trade, nor open-handed princes to stimulate it. One after another the Genoese looms were closed, until but a few only continued working. The Lyons textures improved each year in excellence. The French silks rose in celebrity and value ; and by the year 1670 the exports of Lyons merchandise for England, Germany, Sweden, and Spain had already acquired a vast development.

This prosperity was, however, destined to receive a terrible blow from

the religious persecutions that inaugurated the latter half of the Grand Monarch's reign. Louis XIV. by the odious advice of his Jesuit confessors, Père Lachaise and Père Letellier, resolved upon the extermination of Protestantism in France. The French Protestants were a numerous and useful body. Belonging chiefly to the most respectable of the manufacturing classes, they were the very sinews of their country's trade. The most elementary rules of political prudence would have counselled a wise king to attach them to their native soil by an enlightened toleration of religious freedom. But Louis XIV. was not a wise king, he was only an obstinate one. In 1680 appeared a decree prohibiting silk-weavers from employing Protestant workmen or taking Protestant apprentices. This injudicious act staggered the Lyons trade; half the looms were deserted. In 1685 the King, taking no heed of the prudent counsels of a few earnest men like Fénelon, who foresaw what would happen, put the crown to his folly by revoking the edict of Nantes; and this time the French silk trade collapsed almost entirely. Fifty thousand families of French Protestants emigrated to England, Holland, and North Germany. The number of looms at Lyons, which had previously been ten thousand, was suddenly reduced to two thousand five hundred; whilst the looms for making ribbons and braiding sunk from eight thousand to three thousand. The persecuted weavers carried their trade with them to Geneva, Zurich, Creveld, Berlin, Elberfeld, and London. In the latter town they established themselves in the district of Spitalfields, where their descendants continue to flourish to this day. It is to these poor refugees that we owe our English silk trade; for, although the first establishment of a silk loom in England dates from the year 1620, our manufactures had been small and unimportant.

It was not until the regency of Philip of Orleans that the Lyons trade recovered partially from the disastrous consequences of Louis XIV.'s bigotry. The gambling mania occasioned by the bubble Mississippi scheme of the Scotchman Law caused an immense number of fortunes to change hands. Servants who had been lucky in their speculations found themselves of a sudden millionaires, whilst on the other hand gentlemen of wealth found themselves with equal suddenness reduced to beggary. Naturally, the purse-proud parvenus began throwing their money about with reckless prodigality, but—as it is an ill wind that blows nobody good—a great many of the squandered coins found their way to the silk-mercers. What more natural but that the enriched Jameses should wish to be clothed sumptuously in silk, velvet, and satin, like his lordly superiors.

The manufactures of Lyons and Tours awoke once more to something like life. To stimulate and encourage them, the Regent conceded the title of "*Royal*" to some of the more important amongst them; and a manufacturer of velvet, named Quinson, was ennobled, as much to recompense him personally for his services to the silk trade, as to do honour to the commerce generally. Moreover, the Duke of Orleans decided that large pecuniary rewards should be conferred out of the State exchequer to

any individual who should make a discovery tending either to the improvement of the looms or the amelioration of the silk itself.

In 1744 the Cardinal Fleury, then Prime Minister, sent the famous mechanician Vancauson to Lyons, in order to inspect the looms and report upon their deficiencies. Vancauson brought the most praiseworthy zeal to bear in the discharge of this mission. Having carefully studied the working of the looms, he judged that they were susceptible of considerable improvement; and, putting his criticisms into action, he not only suggested the changes that were needed, but also invented a new loom capable of weaving two pieces of silk at a time instead of one. This, however, caused a rebellion amongst the workmen. The stupid fellows imagined that the inventor was desirous of superseding handwork, and they stoned him one day in the public streets. Vancauson, to revenge himself, contrived a machine by which a donkey could weave a whole piece of silk by himself without the aid of man. The *Mercur de France*, of November, 1745, gives a very detailed description of this machine, and enumerates the advantages that might be derived from its adoption. But perhaps donkeys were more scarce than men in those days; and this may explain why Vancauson's witty invention was never brought into use.

During the second half of the eighteenth century the manufacturing of silk made further progress, due especially to Philippe Lassalle, a clever mechanician, as renowned for his skill as a painter and draughtsman as for his ability as a master-weaver. This talented citizen imagined a new machine, by means of which the designing of figures upon silk was carried to such a pitch of perfection that two portraits of Louis XV. and Catherine II. of Russia were executed, to the admiration and amazement of connoisseurs. These two portraits were shown at the London Exhibition of 1861, and were universally declared to be matchless as works of art. Philippe Lassalle may be looked upon as the forerunner of Jacquard. He died in 1804.

After the Revolution, during which, by the way, the silk trade was at one time totally ruined, Napoleon ordered that none but French silks and velvets should be used in the adornment of the Imperial palaces and in the official costumes of the State dignitaries. The Lyons and Tours manufactures were restored during the Empire to their former state of prosperity. The Continental blockade had closed almost all the European ports to English goods, so that there was no competition with Spitalfields textures to be dreaded in the markets of either Germany, Italy, or Russia. It was during this period, in which Lyons enjoyed a complete monopoly for the sale of its merchandise in Europe, that French silks, from being exported in such prodigious quantities, acquired their great celebrity. Jacquard then appeared, and wrought a complete revolution in the manner of weaving by the introduction of improved machinery.

This man Jacquard was neither a mechanician nor an artist, nor even a superior workman. It is more than probable that of his own self, unaided, he would never have thought of inventing anything; but he had

a shrewd mind, and possessed the valuable faculty of discerning what was useful and good in the works of others. A machine of Vancanson's, that had been laid aside and forgotten, struck him as peculiarly ingenious, and he soon recognized that, with a few modifications, it might be made to render the greatest services. Before this time nothing was more complicated than the weaving of silk. Each loom required two workmen, and there was an immense deal of mounting and dismounting, screwing and unscrewing, to be accomplished whenever it was necessary to fix or unfix the silk on the frames. This made of the fabrication of silk an excessively lengthy and tedious operation. Jacquard's loom suppressed one of the two workmen and considerably simplified the manœuvring of the mechanism, so that the one remaining weaver had much less to do than when he was aided by a fellow. It was at the Paris Exhibition of National Industry, in 1801, that the new machine was first displayed; but, as very often happens in like cases, the wise jurymen passed it by without noticing its perfections, and merely awarded to it a bronze medal. Jacquard was not discouraged,—inventors have tough skins,—he set up a few of his looms in an empty wing of a hospital at Lyons, which he hired for this purpose, and obtained some very satisfactory results. But the weavers in the great manufactories having heard that a machine had been invented to diminish the number of "hands," burst into poor Jacquard's workshop, smashed all his looms, and compelled him to fly for his very life. Sick at heart, he was thinking already of carrying his invention to England, when, happily for his country, a Government inspector who was present at the sale by auction of the broken looms (they were being sold by the weight as old iron and wood!) set his eye upon them, detected their true worth, and drew up a report upon them, which he forwarded to the Home Minister. The Government immediately offered Jacquard a premium of fifty francs (2*l.*) for each loom he would set up. In 1806 the Municipal Council of Lyons purchased of him for a pension of 8,000 francs (120*l.*) the exclusive right of working the machines. This was a beggarly indemnity; but the inventor was poor, and he was too glad to accept it. In 1819 his services were tardily acknowledged by the decoration of the Legion of Honour; and in 1839 his fellow-citizens reflecting, all at once, that Jacquard was a great man, and that he had poured a countless number of million francs into their pockets, erected to him a statue of bronze. Of course he was dead then.

The invention of Jacquard gave a new stimulus to the silk trade. The number of looms in France in 1789, before the Revolution, was 17,000. Under the Empire, the number rose from 900, to which it had fallen in 1798, to 12,000. In 1825 there were 27,000 looms; in 1835, 40,000; in 1847, 55,000; and the cost of the silk produced by these 55,000 looms was 250,000,000 francs (10,000,000*l.*) In 1855 the looms had risen to 70,000. At present they are about 80,000 in number; but the silk trade has suffered considerably during the last few years from the disease prevalent amongst silkworms, and the Lyons trade can scarcely be said to be

in so prosperous a condition now as it was twenty years ago. The causes of the silkworm disease are not known. The most eminent men of science are engaged in trying to fathom the mystery ; and it is sincerely to be hoped, not only on account of the Lyons manufacturers, but in the interests of the silk trade generally, that some means will be found of combating the evil.

Meanwhile, however, it is satisfactory to note the immense development which the art of silk-weaving has acquired in Europe. France is very far from enjoying now the monopoly of former times. Russia has already 15,000 looms of her own ; Prussia and Saxony, 85,000 ; Basle and Zurich, 20,000 ; Austria and Italy are making giant strides in the same direction ; and England has, of late years, made such wonderful progress in the manufacturing of silk, that she now actually undersells France in the Continental markets, and completely outstrips that country in her colonial exports.

We cannot close this article without dwelling for a moment with pleasure upon this last fact, which speaks so eloquently for the enterprising spirit and for the indomitable perseverance of our fellow-countrymen. The English silk manufacturers have had to fight their own way, without the powerful aid of Government patronage and State subsidies lavished upon their rivals. They have also had the immense prestige of the Lyons trade-mark to cope with ; and yet they have succeeded in bringing to market silks which are not only cheaper than the French goods, but which, every impartial judge must confess, yield nothing in quality of texture or in brilliancy of dye to the more vaunted wares of Lyons. It is a well-known fact, that English silks are being continually exported to France, shipped back to England, and sold in our towns as "genuine French silks," without any one being able to detect the difference. And this circumstance would incline us to ask, "Why should the antiquated prejudices of the public make such trickery necessary ?"

A little more patriotism, ladies ! You must be hard to please, if you are not satisfied with the admirable textures which were exhibited as the work of British weavers, at Kensington in 1862, and at Paris in 1867. Remember that commerce has its international battles, in which the credit of a country is as much at stake as at Blenheim or Trafalgar. When our champions show game fight, let us back them up and give them encouragement. Believe us, you will look none the less well for ordering your pretty dresses of English velvet and English silk.

From an Island.

PART II.

V.

IN writing this little episode I have tried to put together one thing and another—to describe some scenes that I saw myself, and some that were described to me. My window looks out upon the garden, and is just over the great bed of lilies. I shut it down, and began to dress for dinner, with an odd dim feeling already of what the future might have in store. It was a half-conscious consciousness of what was passing in the minds of those all about. For some days past Mrs. St. Julian's anxious face seemed to follow me about the room. Poor little Emilia's forced patience and cheerfulness were more sad to me than any impatience or fretfulness. Hexham, Hester, even Lady Jane, each seemed to strike a note, in my present excited and receptive state of mind. It is one for which there is no name, but which few people have not experienced. I dressed quickly, the dark corners of my room seemed looming at me, and it was with an odd anxious conviction of disturbance at hand that I hurried down along the gallery to the drawing-room, where we assembled before dinner. On my way I met Emilia on the stairs, in her white dinner dress, with a soft white knitted shawl drawn closely round her. She slid her little chill hand through my arm, and asked me why I looked so pale. Dear soft little woman, she seemed of us all the most tender and disarming. Even sorrow and desolation, I thought, should be vanquished by her sweetness. And perhaps I was right when I thought so.

We were not the last. Hester followed us. She was dressed in a floating gauze dress, and she had one great white lily in her dark hair. "It is a great deal too big, Hester," cried Mrs. William; but I thought I had never seen her more charming.

"How much better mamma is looking," Hester said that evening at dinner, and as she spoke she glanced at her mother sitting at the head of the long table in the tall carved chair.

When the party was large, and the sons of the house at home, we dined in an old disused studio of St. Julian's: a great wooden room, unpapered and raftered, with a tressel-table of the painter's designing, and half-finished frescos and sketches hanging upon the walls. There was a high wooden chimney and an old-fashioned glass reflecting the scene, the table, the people, the crimson druggist, of which a square covered the boards. In everything St. Julian touched there was a broad quaint stamp of his own, and this room had been inhabited and altered by

him. Two rough hanging lamps from the rafter lit up the long white table, and the cups of red berries and green leaves with which I had attempted to dress it. There was something almost patriarchal in this little assembly: the father at the end of the table, the sons and daughters all round. William and his wife by Mrs. St. Julian, and pretty Hester sitting by her father. On the other side Lady Jane was established. St. Julian had taken her in. He had asked her a few questions at first, specially about the letter she had received from Bevis, but carefully, so that Emilia should not overhear them.

"He seemed to be enjoying himself," said Lady Jane. "He was talking of going on a shooting-party a little way up the river if he could get through his work in time."

She did not notice St. Julian's grave look as she spoke, and went on in her usual fashion. I remember she was giving him one person's views on art and another's, and her own, and describing the pastille she had had done. St. Julian looked graver and graver, and more impatient as she went on. Patience was not his strong point.

"How long does it take you to paint a picture, Mr. St. Julian?" Lady Jane asked. "I wish I could paint, and I'm sure I wish Beverley could, for he cannot manage upon his allowance at all. How nice it must be to take up a brush and—paint cheques, in fact, as you do. Clem can sketch wonderfully quickly; she took off Lord Scudamore capitally. Of course she would not choose to sketch for money, but artists have said they would gladly offer large sums for her paintings. Do your daughters help you?" inquired poor Lady Jane, affably feeling that she was suiting her conversation to her company. "Do you ever do caricatures?"

"We will talk about painting, Lady Jane, when you have been here some days longer," said St. Julian. "You had better ask the girls any questions you may wish to have answered, and get them, if possible, to give you some idea of the world we live in."

To poor Lady Jane's utter amazement, St. Julian then began talking to Hexham across the table, and signed to his wife to move immediately after dinner was over. We all went back walking across the garden to the drawing-room, for the night was fine, and the little covered way was for bad weather.

Some of us sat in the verandah. It was a bright starry evening. A great bright planet was rising from behind the sweeping down. The lights from the wooden room were shining too. Lady Jane presently seemed to get tired of listening to poor Mrs. William's nursery retrospections—Mary Annes, and Susans, and tea and sugar, and what Mrs. Mickleman had said when she parted from her nursery-maid; and what Mrs. William herself meant to say to the girl when she got home on Monday; not that Mrs. William was disposed to rely entirely upon Mrs. Mickleman, who was certainly given to exaggerate, &c. The girls were in the garden. Emilia had gone up to little Bevis. Lady Jane

jumped up, with the usual rattle of bracelets and necklaces, and said she should take a turn too, and join the young ladies.

Mrs. William confessed, as Lady Jane left the verandah, that she was glad she was not *her* sister-in-law.

"She has such a strange abrupt manner," said the poor lady. "Don't you find it very awkward, Queenie? I never know whether she likes me to talk to her or not—do you?"

"I have no doubt about it," I said, laughing.

The evening was irresistible: starlit, moonlit, soft-winded.

A few minutes later I, too, went out into the garden, and walked along the dark alley towards the knoll, from whence there is a pretty view of the sea by night, and over the hedge and along the lane. From where I stood I saw that the garden-gate was open, for the moon was shining in a broad silver stream along the lane that led to the farm. The farm was not really ours, but all our supplies came from there, and we felt as if it belonged to us. Mona knew the cows and the horses, and the very sheep enclosed in their pen for the night. As I was standing peaceful and resting under the starlit dome, something a little strange and inexplicable now happened, which I could not at all understand at the time. I saw some one moving in the lane beyond the hedge. I certainly recognized Lady Jane walking away in the shadow that lay along the banks of that moonlight stream; but what was curious to me was this: it seemed to me that she was not alone, that a dark tall figure of a man was beside her. It was not one of our men, though I could not see the face—of this I felt quite sure. The two went on a little way, then she turned; and I could have declared that I saw the gleam of his face in the distance through the shadow. Lady Jane's hand was hanging in the moonlight, and her trinkets glistening. Of her identity I had no doubt. There is a big tree which hangs over the road, and when they, or when she, reached it, she stopped for a moment, as if to look about her, and then, only Lady Jane appeared from its shadow—the other figure had vanished. I could not understand it at all. I have confessed that I am a foolish person, and superstitious at times. I had never seen poor Bevis. Had anything happened? Could it be a vision of him that I had seen? I got a little frightened, and my heart began to beat. It was only for an instant that I was so absurd. I walked hastily towards the garden-door, and met Lady Jane only a few steps off, coming up very coolly.

"How lovely this moonlight is, Mrs. Campbell!" she cried, more affably than usual.

"Who was that with you? Didn't I see some one with you, Lady Jane?" I asked, hurriedly.

Lady Jane looked me full in the face.

"What do you mean?" said she. "I went out for a stroll by myself. I am quite alone, as you see."

Something in her tone reassured me. I felt sure she was not speaking

the truth. It was no apparition I had seen, but a real tangible person. It was no affair of mine, though it struck me as a singular proceeding. We both walked back to the house together. The girls' white dresses were gleaming here and there upon the lawn. Hexham passed us hastily and went on and joined them. William was taking a turn with his cigar. As we passed the dining-room window I happened to look in. St. Julian was sitting at the table, with his head resting on his hands, and beside him Mrs. St. Julian, who must have gone back to the room after dinner. A paper was before them, over which the two were bending.

We found no one in the drawing-room, and only a lamp spluttering and a tea-table simmering in one corner, and Mrs. William, who was half asleep on the sofa. "I shall go back to the others," said my companion; and I followed, nothing loth.

What a night it was! Still, dark, sweet, fragrant shadows, quivering upon the moon-stream; a sudden, glowing, summer's night, coming like a gem set in the midst of grey days, of storms, swift gales, of falling autumnal leaves and seasons.

The clear three-quarter moon was hanging over the gables and roofs of the Lodges; the high stars streamed light; a distant sea burnt with pale radiance; the young folks chattered in the trembling gleams.

"Look at that great planet rising over the down," said Hexham. "Should you like that to be your star, Miss St. Julian?"

"I should like a fixed star," Hester answered, gravely. "I should like it to be quite still and unchanging, and to shine with an even light."

"That is not a bit like you, Hester," said William, who had come up, and who still had a schoolboy trick of teasing his sisters; "it is much more like Emilia, or my wife. You describe them, and take all the credit to yourself."

"Oh, William! Emilia is anything but a fixed star," cried Aileen. "She would like to jump out of her orbit to-morrow, and go off to Bevis, if she could. Margaret is certainly more like."

"You shall have the whole earth for your planet, Miss Hester," said Hexham. Then he added less seriously, "They say it looks very bright a little way off."

Moonlight gives a strange, intensified meaning to voices as well as to shadows. No one spoke for a minute, until Lady Jane, who was easily bored, jumped up, and said that people ought to be ashamed to talk about stars now-a-days, so much had been said already; and that, after all, she should go back for some tea.

I left her stirring her cup, with Mrs. William still half asleep in her corner, and I myself went up to my room. Mrs. St. Julian was sitting with her husband in the studio, the parlour-maid told me. Outside was the great burning night, inside a silent house, dark, with empty chambers and doors wide open on the dim staircase and passages. I would gladly have stayed out with the others, but I had a week's accounts to overlook on this Saturday night. The odd anxiety I had felt before dinner came

back to me again now that I was alone. I tried to shake off the feeling which oppressed me, and I went in and stood for a moment by my little Mona's bedside. Her sweet face, her quiet breath, and peaceful dreams seemed to me to belong to the stars outside. As I looked at the child, I found myself once more thinking over my odd little adventure with Lady Jane, and wondering whether it would be well to speak of it, and to whom? I had lived long enough to feel some of the troubles and complications both of speech and of silence. Once more my heart sank, as it used to do when difficulties seemed to grow on every side before I had come to this kind house of refuge; and yet, difficult as life was undoubtedly to me, as well as to others, it seemed to me, looking back, that, seen from a distance, a light shone from the hearts and doings of the children of men, as clear as the light of which Hexham had spoken, reflected from this sin-weighted and sorrow-driven world. I pulled my table and my lamp to the window: the figures were still wandering in the garden; I saw Hester's white dress flit by more than once. Such nights count in the sum of one's life.

VI.

Mona was standing ready dressed in her Sunday frills and ribbons by my bedside when I awoke next morning.

"It is raining, mamma," she said. - "We had wanted to go up to the beacon before breakfast."

It seemed difficult to believe that this was the same world that I had closed my eyes upon. The silent, brilliant, mysterious world of stars and sentiment was now grey, and mist-wreathed, and rain-drenched. The practical result of my observations was to say, "Mona, go and tell them to light a fire in the dining-room."

St. Julian, who is possessed by a horrible stray demon of punctuality, likes all his family to assemble to the sound of a certain clanging bell, that is poor Emilia's special aversion. Mrs. St. Julian never comes down to breakfast. I was only just in time this morning to fulfil my duties and make the tea and the coffee. Hester came out of her room as I passed the door. She, too, had come back to every-day life again, and had put away her white robes and lilies for a stuff dress,—a quaint blue dress, with puffed sleeves, and a pretty fanciful trimming of her mother's devising, gold braid and velvet round the wrists and neck. Her pretty gloom of dark hair was pinned up with golden pins. As I looked at her admiringly, I began to think to myself that, after all, rainy mornings were perhaps as compatible with sentiment as purple starry skies. I could not help thinking that there was something a little shy and conscious in her manner: she seemed to tread gently, as if she were afraid of waking some one, as if she were thinking of other things. She waited for me, and would not go into the dining-room until she had made sure that I was following. Only Hexham was there, reading his letters by the burning fire of wood, when we first came in. He turned round and smiled:—had the stars left their

imprint upon him too? He carried his selection of eggs and cutlets and toasted bread from the side-table, and put himself quietly down by Hester's side: all the others dropped in by degrees.

"Here is another French newspaper for you, papa," said Emilia, turning over her letters with a sigh. St. Julian took it from her quickly, and put it in his pocket.

Breakfast was over. The rain was still pouring in a fitful, gusty way, green ivy-leaves were dripping, creepers hanging dully glistening about the windows, against which the great fresh drops came tumbling. The children stood curiously watching, and making a play of the falling drops. There was Susy's raindrop, and George's on the window-ledge, and Mr. Hexham's.

"Oh, Mr. Hexham's has won!" cried Susy, clasping her little fat hands in an agony of interest.

I looked out and saw the great gusts of rain beating and drifting against the hedgerows, wind-blown mists crossing the fields and the downs. It was a stormy Sunday, coming after that night of wonders. But the wind was high; the clouds might break. The church was two miles off, and we could not get there then; later we hoped we might have a calmer hour to walk to it.

The afternoon brightened as we had expected, and most of us went to afternoon service snugly wrapped in cloaks, and stoutly shod, walking up hill and down hill between the bright and dripping hedges to the little white-washed building where we Islanders are exhorted, buried, christened, married by turns. It is always to me a touching sight to see the country folks gathering to the sound of the old jangling village bells, as they ring their pleasant calls from among the ivy and birds'-nests in the steeple, and summon—what a strange, toil-worn, weather-beaten company!—to prayer and praise. Furrowed faces bent, hymn-books grasped in hard crooked fingers, the honest red smiling cheeks of the lads and lasses trudging along side by side, the ancient garments from lavender drawers, the brown old women from their kitchen corners, the babies toddling hand-in-hand. Does one not know the kindly Sunday throng, as it assembles, across fields and downs, from nestling farm and village byways? Mrs. William's children came trotting behind her, exchanging cautious glances with the Sunday-school, and trying to imitate a certain business-like, church-going air which their mother affected. Hexham and the others were following at some little distance. Emilia never spoke much, and to-day she was very silent; but though she was silent I could feel her depression, and knew, as well as if she had put it all into words, what was passing in her mind. Once during the service, I heard a low shivering sigh by my side, but when I glanced at her, her face looked placid, and as we came away the light of the setting sun came shining full upon it. A row of boys were sitting on the low churchyard wall in this western light, which lit up the fields and streamed across the homeward paths of the little congregation. I must not forget to say that, as we passed out, it

seemed to me that, in the crowd waiting about the door, I recognized a tall and bending figure that I had seen somewhere before. Somewhere—by moonlight. I remembered presently where and when it was.

"Who was that?" asked Emilia, seeing me glance curiously.

"That is what I should like to know," said I. "Shall we wait for Lady Jane? I have a notion she could tell us."

We waited, but no Lady Jane appeared.

"She must have gone on," said Emilia. "It is getting cold; let us follow them, dear Quenico."

I was still undecided as to what I had better do. It seemed that it would be better to speak to Lady Jane herself than to relate my vague suspicions to anybody else. Little Emilia of all people was so innocent and unsuspecting that I hesitated before I told her what I had seen. I was hesitating still, when Emmy took my arm again.

"Come!" she said; and so we went on together through the darkening village street, past the cottages where the pans were shining against the walls as the kitchen fires flamed. The people began to disperse once more: some were at home, stooping as they crossed their low cottage thresholds; others were walking away along the paths and the hills that slope from the village church to cottages by the sea. We saw Hester and Aileen and Hexham going off by the long way over the downs; but no Lady Jane was with them. We were not far from home when Emilia stopped before a little rising mound by the roadside, on which a tufted holly-tree was standing, already reddening against the winter.

"That is the tree my husband likes," said she. "It was bright red with holly-berries the morning we were married. Little Bevvv watches the berries beginning to burn, as he calls it. I often bring him here."

Some people cannot put themselves into words, and they say, not the actual thing they are feeling, but something quite unlike, and yet which means all they would say. Some other people, it is true, have words enough, but no selves to put to them. Emilia never said a striking thing, rarely a pathetic one; but her commonplaces came often more near to me than the most passionate expressions of love or devotion. Something in the way she looked, in the tone with which she spoke of the holly-tree, touched me more than there seemed any occasion for. I cannot tell what it was; but this I do know, that silence, dulness, everything utters at times, the very stones cry out, and, in one way or another, love finds a language that we all can understand.

We stood for a few minutes under the holly-tree, and then walked quickly home. I let Emilia go in. I waited outside in the dim grey garden, pacing up and down in the twilight. Lady Jane, as I expected, arrived some ten minutes after we did; but I missed the opportunity I had wished for, for Hexham and the two girls appeared almost at the same minute, with bright eyes and fresh rosy faces, from their walk, and we all went up to tea in the mistress's room.

This was the Williams' last evening. Only one little incident somewhat spoilt its harmony.

"Who was that Captain Sigourney, who called just after we had gone to church?" Mrs. William asked, innocently, during a pause in the talk at dinner.

This simple question caused some of us to look up curiously.

"Captain Sigourney," said Lady Jane, in a loud, trumpet-like tone, "is a friend of mine. I asked him to call upon me."

St. Julian gave one of his flashes, a look half-amused, half-angry. He glanced at his wife, and then at Lady Jane, who was cutting up her mutton into long strips, calmly excited, and prepared for battle. St. Julian was silent, however, and the engagement, if engagement there was to be, did not take place until later in the evening. I felt very glad that the matter was taking this turn and that the absurd mystery, whatever it might be, should come to an end without my being implicated in it. It was no affair of mine if Lady Jane liked to have a dozen Captains in attendance upon her, but it seemed to me a foolish proceeding. I had reason to conclude that St. Julian had said something to Lady Jane that evening. I was not in the drawing-room after dinner. One of the servants was ill, and I was obliged to attend to her; but as I was coming down to say good-night to them all I met Lady Jane—I met a whirlwind in the passage. She gave me one look. Her whole aspect was terrible; her chains and many trinkets seemed rattling with indignation. She looked quite handsome in her fury; her red hair and false plaits seemed to stand on end, her eyes to pierce me through and through, and if I had been guilty I think I must have run away from this irate apparition. Do I dream it, or did I hear the two words, "impertinent interference," as she turned round with the air of an empress, and shut her door loud in my face? Mrs. St. Julian happened to be in her room, and the noise brought her kind head out into the passage, and, not I am afraid very calmly or coherently, I told her what had happened.

"I must try and appease her. I suppose my husband has spoken to her," said Mrs. St. Julian; and she boldly went and knocked at the door of Lady Jane's room, and, after an instant's hesitation, walked quietly in. I do not know what charm she used, but somewhat to my dismay, a messenger came to me in the drawing-room presently to beg that I would speak to Lady Jane. I saw malicious Aileen with a gleam of fun in her eyes at my unfeigned alarm. I found Lady Jane standing in the middle of the room, in a majestic sort of dressing-gown, with all her long tawny locks about her shoulders. Mrs. St. Julian was sitting in an arm-chair near the toilet-table, which was all glittering with little bottles and ivory handles. This scarlet apparition came straight up to me as I entered, with three brisk strides. "I find I did you an injustice," she said, loftily relenting, though indignant still. "Mrs. St. Julian has explained matters to me. I thought you would be glad to know at once that I was aware of the mistake I had made. I beg your pardon. Good evening,

Mrs. Campbell," said Lady Jane, dismissing me all of a breath. I found myself outside in the dark passage again, with a curious dazzle of the brilliantly lighted room, with its odd perfume of otto of roses, of that weird apparition with its flaming robe and red hair and burning cheeks.

I was too busy next morning helping Mrs. William and her children and boxes to get off by the early boat, to have much time to think of apparitions or my own wounded feelings. Dear little Georgy and Susy peeped out of the carriage-window with many farewell kisses. The three girls stood waving their hands as the carriage drove past the garden. The usual breakfast-bell rang and we all assembled, and Lady Jane, whose anger was never long-lived, came down in pretty good-humour. To me she was most friendly. There was a shade of displeasure in her manner to St. Julian. To Hexham she said that she had quite determined upon an expedition to Warren Bay that afternoon, and to the castle next day, and she hoped he would come too. Lady Jane bustled off after breakfast to order a carriage.

VII.

From "the mistress's" room, with its corner windows looking out every way, we could see downs, and sea, and fields, and the busy road down to the shore. Mrs. St. Julian was able to be out so little that she liked life at second-hand, and the sight of people passing, and of her children swinging at the gate, and of St. Julian as he came and went from his studio sometimes, with his pipe and his broad-brimmed hat—all this was a never-failing delight to her. Hester sat writing for her mother this morning. It was the Monday after Lady Jane's arrival, and I established myself with my work in the window. Suddenly the mother asked, "Where is Emilia?"

"Emilia is in the garden with Bevis," said Hester; "they were picking red berries off the hedge when I came up."

"And where is Lady Jane?" said Mrs. St. Julian.

"She is gone to look at a pony-carriage, with her maid," said Hester.

"Poor Lady Jane was very indignant last night. You will be amused to hear that I am supposed to be encouraging a young man at this moment, for purposes of my own, to carry her off," said Mrs. St. Julian. "I am afraid Henry is vexed about it. Look here." As she spoke she gave me a satiny, flowingly-written note to read.

DEAR MRS. ST. JULIAN,

Castle Scudamore, Saturday.

I have been made aware that my stepdaughter has been followed to your house by a person with whom I and her father are most anxious that she should have no communication *whatever*. Whether this has happened with your cognizance I cannot tell, but I shall naturally consider you responsible while she is under your roof, and I must beg you will be so good as not to continue to admit Captain Sigourney's visits. He is a person totally unsuitable in *every* respect to my stepdaughter, and it is a marriage her father could not sanction.

I hope Emilia is well, and that she has had satisfactory accounts by this last mail. We received a few lines only, on business, from Bevis. Believe me,

Yours truly, E. MONTAGUE.

"The whole thing is almost too absurd to be vexed about," said Mrs. St. Julian, smiling.

"Why was Lady Jane so angry with you, Queenie?" Hester asked; and then it was I confessed what I had seen that evening on the Knoll.

"Lady Jane told me all about it," my mistress continued. "She says Captain Sigourney's only object in life is to see her pass by. To tell you the truth, I do not think she cares in the least for him. She found him at the gate that evening, she says." Mrs. St. Julian hesitated, and then went on. "She must be very attractive. She tells me that she believes Mr. Hexham admires her very much, and that, on the whole, she thinks he is more the sort of person to suit her." Mrs. St. Julian spoke with a little gentle malice; and yet I could see she half believed, and that there was prudence, too, in what she was saying.

There was a pause. Hester looked straight before her, and I stitched on. At last the mother spoke again,—

"I wish you would go to Emilia, my Hester," she said, a little anxiously. "I am afraid she is fretting sometimes when she is by herself."

"You poor mamma," cried Hester, jumping up and running to her, and kissing her again and again; "you have all our pain and none of our fun."

"Don't you think so, my dear," said the mother; "I think I have both." Then she called Hester back to her, held her hand, and looked into her face tenderly for a minute. "Go, darling!—but—but take care," she said, as she let her go.

"Take care of what, mamma?" the girl asked, a little consciously; and then Hester ran off, as all young girls will do, nothing loth to get out into the sunshine.

I stitched on at my work, but presently looking up I saw that Hester and Emilia were not alone; Mr. Hexham, who had, I suppose, been smoking his cigar in the garden, had joined them. He was lifting Bevis high up over head, to pick the berries that were shining in the hedge. The Lodges seemed built for pretty live pictures; and the mistress's room, most specially of all the rooms in the house, is a peep-show to see them from. Through this window, with its illuminated border of clematis and ivy and Virginian creeper, I could see the bit of garden lawn, green still and sunlit; the two pretty sisters, in their flowing dresses, straight and slim, smiling at little Bevis; the high sweetbriar hedge, branching like a bower over their heads; and the swallows skimming across the distant down. This was the most romantic window of the three which lighted her room, and I asked my cousin to come and see a pretty group. She smiled, and then sighed as she looked. Poor troubled mother!

"I cannot feel one moment's ease about Bevis," she said. "My poor Emmy! And yet Lady Jane was very positive."

"We shall know to-morrow. You are too anxious, I think," I answered cheerfully; and then I could not help asking her if she thought she should ever be as anxious about George Hexham.

She did not answer except by a soft little smile. Then she sighed again.

Lady Jane's expected letter had not come that Monday evening, but Mrs. St. Julian hoped on. Emilia was daily growing more anxious; she said very little, but every opening door startled her, every word seemed to her to have a meaning. She began to have a clear, ill-defined feeling that they were hiding something from her, and yet, poor little thing, she did not dare ask, for fear of getting bad news. Her soft, wan, appealing looks went to the very hearts of the people looking on. Lady Jane was the only person who could resist her. She was, or seemed to be, ruffled and annoyed, that any one should be anxious when she had said there was no occasion for fear. Mrs. St. Julian would have quietly put off a certain expedition which had been arranged some time before for the next day; but Lady Jane, out of very opposition, was most eager and decided that it should take place. An invitation came for the girls to a ball; this the parents decidedly refused, though Hexham, and Hester too, looked sorely disappointed. Of course Lady Jane knew no reason for any special anxiety, any more than Emilia, and perhaps her confidence and cheerfulness were the best medicine for the poor young wife; who, seeing the sister so bright, began to think that she had overestimated dangers which she only dimly felt and guessed at. So the carriages were ordered after luncheon; but the sun was shining bright in the morning, and Hexham asked Hester and Aileen (shyly, and hesitating as he spoke,) if they would mind being photographed directly.

"Why should you not try a group?" said St. Julian. "Here are Hester, Lady Jane, Mona, Aileen, and Emilia, all wanting to be done at once."

Emilia shrank back, and said she only wanted baby done, not herself.

"I was longing to try a group," said Hexham, "and only waiting for leave. How will you sit?" And he began placing them in a sort of row, two up and one down, with a property-table in the middle. He then began focussing, and presently emerged, pale and breathless and excited, from the little black hood into which he had dived. "Will you look?" said he to St. Julian.

"I think it might be improved upon," said St. Julian, getting interested. "Look up, Mona—up, up. That is better. And cannot you take the ribbon out of your hair?"

"Yes, uncle St. Julian," said Mona; "but it will all tumble down."

"Never mind that," said he; and with one hand Mona pulled away the snood, and then the beautiful stream came flowing and rippling and falling all about her shoulders.

"That is excellent," said the painter. "You, too, Aileen, shake out your locks." Then he began sending one for one thing and one for another. I was despatched for some lilies into the garden, and Lady Jane came too, carrying little Bevis in her arms. When we got back we found one of the prettiest sights I have ever yet seen,—a dream of fair ladies against an ivy wall, flowers and flowing locks, and sweeping

garments. It is impossible to describe the peculiar charm of this living, breathing picture. Emilia, after all, had been made to come into it; little Bevis clapped his hands, and said, "Pooty mamma," when he saw her.

"I don't mind being done in the group," said Lady Jane, "if you will promise not to put any of those absurd white pinafores on me."

Neither of the gentlemen answered, they were both too busy. As for me, I shall never forget the sweet child wonder in my little Mona's face, Hester's bright deep eyes, or my poor Emilia's patient and most affecting expression, as they all stood there motionless; while Hexham held his watch, and St. Julian looked on, almost as excited as the photographer. As Hexham rushed away into his van, with the glass under his arm, we all began talking again.

"It takes one's breath away," said St. Julian, quite excited, "to have the picture there, breathing on the glass, and to feel every instant that it may vanish or dissolve with a word, with a breath. I should never have nerve for photography."

"I believe the great objection is that it blackens one's fingers so," said Lady Jane. "I should have tried it myself, but I did not care to spoil my hands."

As for the picture, Hexham came out wildly exclaiming from his little dark room: never had he done anything so strangely beautiful,—he could not believe it,—it was magical. The self-controlled young man was quite wild with delight and excitement. Lord Ulleskelf walked up, just as we were all clustering round, and he, too, admired immensely.

Hexham rushed up to St. Julian. "It is your doing," he said. "It is wonderful. My fortune is made." He all but embraced his precious glass.

St. Julian was to be the next subject. What a noble wild head it was! There was something human and yet almost mysterious to me in the flash of those pale circling eyes with the black brows and shaggy grey hair. But Hexham's luck failed him, perhaps from over-excitement and inexperience in success. Three or four attempts failed, and we were still at it when the luncheon-bell rang. Hexham was for going on all day; but St. Julian laughed and said it should be another time. This sentiment was particularly approved by Lady Jane, who had a childish liking for expeditions and picnicks, and who had set her heart upon carrying out her drive that afternoon.

VIII.

Hexham had known scarcely anything before this of home-life or home peace. He had carefully treasured his liberty, and vowed to himself that he would keep that liberty always. But now that he had seen Hester, fair, and maidenly, and serene, he could not tell what mysterious sympathy had attracted him. To speak to her, to hear her shy tender voice, affected him strangely. George Hexham did not care to give way

to sentimental emotion ; he felt that his hour had come. He had shared the common lot of men. It was a pity, perhaps, to give up independence and freedom and peace of mind, but no sacrifice was too great to win so dear a prize. So said George to himself as he looked at the glass upon which her image was printed, the image with the wondering eyes. He must get one more picture, he thought, eating his luncheon thoughtfully, but with a good appetite undisturbed by these reflections,—one more of Hester alone. He determined to try and keep her at home that afternoon.

He followed her as she left the room.

"You are not going ? Do stay," said Hexham, imploringly : "I want you ; I want a picture of you all to myself. I told my man we should come back after luncheon."

Hester coloured up. Her mother's warning was still in her ears.

"I—I am afraid I must go," she said, shyly.

"What nonsense !" cried Hexham, who was perfectly unused to contradiction, and excited by his success. "I shall go and tell your mother that it is horrible tyranny to send you off with that *corvée* of children and women, and that you want to stay behind. Lady Jane would stay if I asked her."

Hester did not quite approve of this familiar way of speaking. She drew herself up more and more shyly and coldly.

"No, thank you," she said, "mamma lets me do just as I like. I had rather go with the others."

"In that case," said Hexham, offended, "I shall not presume to interfere." And he turned and walked away.

What is a difference ? A word that means nothing,—a look a little to the right or to the left of an appealing glance. I think that people who quarrel are often as fond of one another as people who embrace. They speak a different language, that is all. Affection and agreement are things quite apart. To agree with the people you love is a blessing unspeakable. But people who differ may also be travelling along the same road on opposite sides. And there are two sides to every road that both lead the same way.

Hexham was so unused to being opposed that his indignation knew no bounds. He first thought of remaining behind, and showing his displeasure by a haughty seclusion. But Lady Jane happened to drive up with Aileen in the pony-carriage she had hired, feathers flying, gauntleted, all prepared to go to conquer.

"Won't you come with us, Mr. Hexham ?" she said, in her most gracious tone.

After a moment's hesitation, Hexham jumped in, for he saw Hester standing not far off, and he began immediately to make himself as agreeable as he possibly could to his companion. It was not much that happened this afternoon, but trifles show which way the wind is blowing. Lady Jane and her cavalier went first, the rest of us followed in Mrs. St.

Julian's carriage. We were bound for a certain pretty bay some two miles off. The way there led across a wide and desolate warren, where sand and gorse spread on either side to meet a sky whose reflections always seemed to me saddened by the dark growth of this arid place. A broad stony military road led to a building on the edge of the cliff—a hotel, where the carriages put up. Then we began clambering down the side of the cliff, out of this somewhat dreary region, into a world brighter and more lovely than I have words to put to it—a smiling plain of glassy blue sea, a vast firmament of heaven; and close at hand bright sandy banks, shining with streams of colour reflected from the crystals and strata upheaved in shining strands; and farther off the boats drifting towards the opal Broadshire Hills.

I do not suppose that anybody seeing us strolling along these lovely cliffs would have guessed the odd and depressing influence that was at work upon most of us. As far as Lady Jane and Hexham and Aileen were concerned, the expedition seemed successful enough; they laughed and chattered, and laughed again. Emilia and her sister followed, listening to their shrieks, in silence, with little Bevis between them. Mona and I brought up the rear. Lady Jane seemed quite well pleased with her companion, and evidently accepted his homage all to herself. I could have shaken her for being so stupid. Could she not see that not one single word he spoke was intended for her. Every one of Hexham's arrows flew straight to the gentle heart for which they were intended. It was not a very long walk—perhaps half an hour in duration—but half an hour is long enough to change a lifetime, to put a new meaning to all that has passed, and to all that is yet to come. People may laugh at such a thing as *désillusionnement*, but it is a very real and very bitter thing, for all that people may say. To some constant natures certainty and unchangeableness are the great charm, the whole meaning of love. Hester, suddenly bewildered and made to doubt, would freeze, and change, and fly at a shadow: where Hester, once certain, would endure all things, bear, and hope, and forgive. I could see that Hexham did not dislike a little excitement; *l'imprévu* had an immense charm for him. He was rapid, determined; so sure of himself that he could afford not to be sure of others. Hexham's tactics were very simple. He loved Hester. Of this he had no doubt, but he had no idea of loving a woman as Shakspeare, for instance, was content to love, or at least to write of it—"Being your slave, what should I do but wait?" This was not in Hexham's philosophy. Hester had offended him, and he had been snubbed; he would show her his indifference, and punish her for his punishment.

We were all on our way back to the carriages when Hester stopped suddenly at a little zigzag path leading down to the sands, down which Mona and I had been scrambling. "Do you think Bevy could get down here?" she asked. "Do let us go down, Emilia. I think we have time; the carriages are not yet ready."

Emilia, although frightened out of her wits, instantly assented, and

Mona and I watched Hester springing from rock to rock and from step to step. She lifted Bevis safe down the steep side; little falling stones, and shells, and sands went showering on to the shingle below: a seagull came out of a hole in the sand, and flew out to sea. Bevy screamed with delight. Hester's quick light step seemed everywhere; she put him safe down below, and then sprang up again to her sister's help. The little excitement acted like a tonic: "How pretty it is here," she said.

We had sat for some ten minutes under the wing of the great cliff, in an arch or hollow, lined with a slender tracery of granite lines close following one another. The arching ridge of the cliff cut the high line of blue sea sharply into a curve.

"It was like a desert island," Hester said, looking at the little cove enclosed in its mighty walls, with the smooth unfurrowed crescent of shingle gleaming and shining, and the white light little waves rushing against the stones; "an island upon which we had been wrecked."

"An island," I thought to myself, "no Hexham had as yet discovered." I wondered how long it would be desert?

Mona, tired of sitting, soon wandered off, and disappeared at the side of the cliff. I do not know how long we should have stayed there if little Bevis, who had never yet heard of a desert island, and who thought people always all lived together, and that it was naughty to be shy, and that he was getting very hungry, and that he had better cry a little, had not suddenly set up a shrill and imperious demand for his dinner, his "'ome," as he called it, Toosan his nurse, and his rocking-horse. Emilia jumped up, and Hester too.

"It must be time for us to go," said Mrs. Beverley.

It is generally easier to climb up than to descend, and so it would have been now for Hester alone. I do not know why the sun-beaten path seemed so hard, the blocks of stone so loose and crumbling. Hester went first, with Bevis in her arms, and at first got on pretty well; but for some reason or other—perhaps that in coming down we had disturbed the stones—certainly as she went on her footsteps seemed less rapid and lucky than they usually were. She stumbled, righted herself, took another step, Bevis clinging tight to her neck. Emilia cried out, frightened. Hester, a little nervous, put Bevy on a big stone, and stood breathless for an instant. "Come up, Emmy," she said; "this way,—there, to that next big step." Emmy did her best, but before she could catch at Hester's extended hand her foot slipped again, and she gave another little scream.

"Hester, help me!"

I was at some little distance. I had tried a little independent track of my own, which proved more impracticable than I had expected. It was in vain I tried to get to Emilia's assistance. There was no real danger for Emilia, clinging to a big granite boulder fixed in the sand, but it was absurd and not pleasant. The sun baked upon the sandy paths. Hester told Bevy to sit still while she went to help mamma. "No, no, no," cried little Bevis when his aunt attempted to leave him, clutching at her

with a sudden spring, which nearly overset her. It was at this instant that I saw, to my inexpressible relief, two keen eyes peering over the edge of the cliff, and Hexham coming down the little path to our relief.

"I could not think where you had got to," he said; "I came back to see. Will you take hold of my stick, Mrs. Beverley; I will come back for the boy, Miss St. Julian." Hexham would have returned a third time for Hester, but she was close behind him, and silently rejected his proffered help. George Hexham turned away in silence. Hester was already scarcely grateful to him for coming back at all. He had spoken to her, but her manner had been so cold, his voice so hard, that it seemed as if indeed all was over between them. Hester was no gentle Griselda, but a tender and yet imperious princess, accustomed to confer favours and to receive gratitude from her subjects. Here was one who had revolted from her allegiance.

* * * *

(Fragment of a letter found in Mr. Hexham's room after his departure:—)

... A little bit of the island is shining through my open glass-pane. I see a green field with a low hedge, a thatched farm, woods, flocks of shade, a line of down rising from the frill of the muslin blind to the straggling branch of clematis that has been put to grow round my window. It is all a nothing compared to really beautiful scenery, and yet it is everything when one has once been conquered by the charm of the place,—the still, sweet influence of its tender lights, its charming *humility* and unpretension, if one can so speak of anything inanimate. It is six o'clock; the sky is patched and streaked with grey and yellowish clouds upon a faint sunset aquamarine; a wind from the sea is moving through the clematis and making the light tendrils dance and swing; a sudden unexpected gleam of light has worked enchantment with the field and the farmstead, the straw is a-flame, the thatch is golden, the dry stubble is gleaming. A sense of peace and evening and rest comes over me as I write and look from my window. This sort of family-life suits me. I do not find time heavy on my hands. St. Julian is a lucky fellow to be the ruler of such a pleasant dominion. I never saw anything more charmingly pretty than its boundaries studded with scarlet berries, and twisted twigs, with birds starting and flying across the road, almost under our horse's feet, as we came along. I am glad I came. Old St. Julian is as ever capital company, and the most hospitable of hosts. Mrs. St. Julian is an old love of mine: she is a sweet and gracious creature. This is more than I can say of my fellow-guest, Lady Jane Beverley, who is the most overpowering of women. I carefully keep out of her way, but I cannot always escape her. Hester St. Julian is very like her mother, but with something of St. Julian's strength of character—she has almost too much. She was angry with me to-day. Perhaps I deserved it. I hope she has forgiven me by this time, for I, to tell the truth, cannot afford to quarrel with her.

Lord Ulleskelf is here a good deal; his long white hair is more silvery than ever; he came up this morning to see my photography; I wish you had been standing by to see our general eagerness and excitement; the fact is, that here in this island, the simplest emotions seem intensified and magnified. Its very stillness and isolation keep us and our energies from overpassing its boundaries. I have been here two days,—I feel as if I had spent a lifetime in the place, and were never going away any more, and as if the world all about was as visionary as the grey Broadshire Hills that we see from High Down. As for certain old loves and interests that you may have known of, I do not believe they ever existed, except upon paper. If I mistake not, I have found an interest here more deep than any passing fancy.

IX.

The day had begun well and brightly, but there was a jar in the music that evening which was evident enough to most of us. We had all been highly wrought from one cause and another, and this may have accounted for some natural reaction. For one thing, we missed William and his family; tiresome as Mrs. William undoubtedly was, her placid monotone harmonized with the rest of the performance, for though she was prosy, she was certainly sweet-tempered, and the children were charming. It had seemed like the beginning of the summer's end to see them drive off; little hands waving and rosy faces smiling good-by. Poor Mona was in despair, and went to bed early. Lady Jane sat looking still black and offended with her host in her corner; something had occasioned a renewed access of indignation. Mrs. St. Julian did her very best to propitiate her indignant guest, but the poor lady gave up trying at last, and leant back in her chair wearily, and closed her eyes. I myself was haunted by the ill-defined feeling of something amiss,—of trouble present or at hand. Hester, too, was out of spirits. It was evident that she and Mr. Hexham had not quite forgiven each other for the morning's discussion. Altogether it was a dismal disjointed evening, during which a new phase of Hexham's character was revealed to us, and it was not the best or the kindest. There was a hard look in his handsome face and sceptical tone in his voice. He seemed possessed by what the French call *l'esprit moqueur*. Hester, pained and silenced at last, would scarcely answer him when he spoke. Her father with an effort got up and took a book and began to read something out of one of Wordsworth's sonnets. It is always delightful to me to hear St. Julian read. His voice rolled and thrilled through the room, and we were all silent for a moment:

Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart,
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea.

"I hate Wordsworth. He is always preaching to one," said Hexham, not very politely, as St. Julian ceased reading. "I never feel so wicked as when I am being preached to."

"I am sorry for you," said St. Julian drily. "I have never been able to read this passage of Wordsworth without emotion since I was a boy, and first found it in my school-books."

Hester had jumped up and slipped out of the room while this discussion was going on; I followed presently, for I remembered a little bit of work which St. Julian had asked us to see to that evening.

He used sometimes to give me work to do for him, although I was not so clever as Hester in fashioning and fitting the things he wanted for his models; but I did my best, and between us we had produced some very respectable coiffes, wimples, slashed bodices, and other bygone elegances. We had also concocted an Italian peasant, and a mediæval princess, and a dear little Dutch girl—our triumph. I found I had not my materials at

hand, and I went to the studio to look for them. I was looking for a certain piece of silken stuff which I thought I had seen in the outer studio, and which my cousin had asked me to stitch together so as to make a cloak. I turned the things over and over, but I could not discover what I was in quest of among the piles and heaped-up properties that were kept there. I supposed it must be in the inner room, and I lifted the curtain and went in. I had expected to find the place dark, and silent, and empty. But the room was not dark. The wood fire was burning; the tall candles were lighted; the pictures on the walls were reflecting the light, and looking almost alive, crowding there, and gazing with those strange living eyes that St. Julian knew so well how to paint; a statesman in his robe; a musician leaning against the wall, drawing his bow across the strings of his violin. As I looked at him in the stream of the fire-flame, I almost expected to hear the conquering sound of the wailing melody. But he did not play; he seemed to me to be waiting, and looking out, and listening to other music than his own. All these pictures were so familiar to us all as we came and went, that we often scarcely paused to look at them. But to-night in the firelight, they impressed me anew with a sense of admiration for the wonderful power of the man who had produced them. Over the chimney hung a poet, noble and simple and kingly, as St. Julian had painted him. Next to the poet was the head of a calm and beautiful woman, bending in a stream of light. It was either Emilia or her mother in her youth. . . . An evangelist, with a grand, quiet brow and a white flood of silver beard, came next; and then warriors, and nobles, and maidens with flowing hair. They seemed almost touched to life to-night. Hester was standing underneath the picture of the evangelist, a real living picture. Her head was leaning wearily against the wall. She had come in before me, and seemed standing in a dreary way, with hanging hands. The silk stuffs she had collected were on the ground at her feet, and the pattern cloak was hanging from a chair; but she had thrown her work away. I don't know why, unless it was that her eyes were full of great tired tears that she was trying vainly to keep back.

"My dear," I said, frightened; "my dear, what is it? What has happened? Has he vexed you?" I hated myself next instant. I had spoken hastily and without reflection. My question upset her; she struggled for a minute, and then burst out crying, though she was a brave girl—courageous and not given to useless complaints. Then she looked up, flushing crimson reproach at me. "It is not what you seem to think," she said. "Don't you know me better? It is something—I don't know what. How foolish I am." And this time, with an effort, she conquered her tears. "Oh, Queenie!" she said, "I know there is something wrong; some terrible news. I don't dare ask, for they have not told me; and I don't, don't dare ask," she repeated. I was silent, for she was speaking the thought which had been in my own heart of late. At last I said, "One has foolish, nervous frights at times. What makes you so afraid, Hester?"

Hester smiled faintly, with her tear-dimmed face.

"There has been another absurd and provoking scene," she said, "with Lady Jane. Something she said of anxiety, and a letter, and—and—I don't know what frightened me," said Hester, faltering. "She said she would go immediately, that she should marry, meet, write, invite anybody she chose, and that if it were not for this anxiety for Emilia—some letter she expected—she would leave us that instant; and then my mother stopped her, and that is all I know," said Hester, with a great sigh. "It is not worth crying for, is it, Queenie?"

As she spoke the door opened and St. Julian and Hexham came in to smoke their evening pipes. Hester drew herself up with bright flushed cheeks and said a haughty good-night to Hexham as she passed him. But in my heart I thought more than one doubt had caused Hester's tears to flow that night.

Hexham seemed unconscious enough. "I shall be quite ready for sitters to-morrow morning, Miss Hester," said the provoking young man cheerfully. "You won't disappoint me again?"

Hester did not answer, and walked out of the room.

Hexham tried to persuade himself next day that he had made it all right with Hester over-night. He had come down late and had missed her at breakfast, but he made sure she would not fail him, and he got ready his chemicals and kept telling himself that she would come. The glasses were polished bright, and in their places. Everything was, as it should be, he thought; the sun was shining as photographers wish it to shine. Once hearing steps Hexham turned hastily, but it was only St. Julian on his way to his studio; Lady Jane went by presently; then it was Lord Ulleskelf who passed by; and each time Hexham felt more aggrieved and disappointed. Hexham came to me twice as I sat at work in the drawing-room window, but I did not know where Hester had gone, or if she meant to sit to him. Little Mona went by last of all. The child had her hands full of grasses that I had sent her to gather. She went wandering on between the garden beds with a little busy brain full of pretty fancies, strange fairy dreams and stories of a world in which she was living apart from us all. It was an enchanted world, a court where lords and ladies were doing stately obeisance to a fairy Queen in the lily-bed. The tall pampas grasses waved over my little maiden's head and bowed their yellow flowers in the wind. The myrtles glimmered mysteriously, the tamarisks drooped their fringed stems, wind-blown shrubs shivered and shook, while a woodpecker from the outer world who had ventured into fairy realms was laboriously climbing the stem of a slender elm-tree. Hexham asked Mona if she knew where Hester was, and the child, waking up, pointed to the house: "She was there, at work for uncle Henry, in the housekeeper's room, as I passed," said Mona.

Hexham was, as I have said, a young man of an impatient humour. He was a little hard as young men are apt to be. But there was something reassuring in his very hardness and faith in himself and his own

doings. Reassuring because it was a genuine expression of youthful strength and power. No bad man could have had that perfect confidence which marked most of George Hexham's sayings and doings. His was, after all, the complacency of good intentions.

He had taken it as a matter of course, not only that Hester would come, but that she would come with a feeling not unlike the feeling with which he was expecting her. He could not understand her absence, her continued coldness. What did it mean? did it, could it mean that she was unconscious of his admiration? It had suddenly become a matter of utter consequence to the young man that he should find her now, reproach her, read her face, and discover why she had thwarted him. He might see her all day and at any hour, and yet this was the hour he had set apart as his own—when he wanted her—the hour he had looked forward to and counted on and longed for. He came to me a third time, and asked me if I would take a message for him. I was a little sorry for him, although I thought he deserved this gentle punishment.

"If you will come with me we will go and look for her," I said.

"You are doing me an immense kindness," cried Hexham, gratefully.

The housekeeper's room could be entered by the courtyard: it was next to the outer studio, into which it led by a door. It was used for models and had been taken from the servants. As Mona had said, Hester was sitting in the window at work when we came in; the door into the studio was open, and I heard voices of people talking within.

Hester's needle flew along in a sort of rhythmic measure. She knew Hexham had come in with me, but she did not look up, only worked on. Poor Hester! her heart was too heavy for blushes or passing agitations. Hexham had wounded her and disappointed her, but, young as she was, the girl had a sense of the fitness of things which kept her from betraying all she felt; and, indeed, this great unaccountable feeling of anxiety now occupied most thoughts and feelings, except those to which she would not own. George Hexham stood with a curious face, full of anger and sympathy and compunction, watching her stitches as they flew. One, two, three, he counted, and the quaint little garment turned and twisted in her pale hands. Once she looked up at him. It would have been better if she had looked reproachful; but no, it was a grave cold glance she gave, and then her head bent down once more over her work. I left them to their own explanations, and went back to my drawing-room window.

Afterwards Hester told me how angry she was with me for bringing him.

"Have you nearly done? May I talk to you when you have finished that stitching?" he said to her presently.

"I can listen while I work," said Hester, still sewing, and if she paused it was only to measure the seams upon the little model for whom they were intended.

That needle flying seemed to poor Hexham an impassable barrier—a

weapon wielded by this Amazon that he could not overcome. It kept him at arms' length; it absorbed her attention; she scarcely listened to what he said as she stuck and threaded and travelled along the strange little garment. He found himself counting the stitches—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight,—it was absurd; it was like an enchantment.

"Hester," cried Hexham, "you won't understand me!" Hester worked on and did not answer. His voice was quick, passionate, and agitated. "You are so calm," he cried. "I do not believe the common weaknesses of life touch you in the least, or that you ever know how to make any allowance for others."

"I can make allowance," faltered Hester, as with trembling hands she stooped and began tying on the child's little garment.

To Hexham's annoyance, at that moment St. Julian appeared.

"You here, Hexham? Come and see Lord Ulleskelf. Is the child ready?" he asked. "That is right;" and he led off the little girl, in her funny Velasquez dress, trotting along to his long quick strides. Hexham followed them to the door, and then turned back slowly.

Hester had sunk wearily in the chair in which she had been sitting, leaning her head upon her hand. She thought it was all over; Hexham was gone. "She did not care," she said to herself; as people say they do not care, when they know in their heart of hearts that they have but to speak to call a welcome answering voice, to put out their hand for another hand to grasp. They do not say so when all is really gone, and there is no answer anywhere. Sometimes she softened, but Hester was indignant to think of the possibility of having been laughed at and made a play of when she herself had come with a heart trusting and true and tender. He could not care for Lady Jane, but he had ventured to say more than he really felt to Hester herself. Now it seemed to her that the whole aim and object of her care should be to prevent Hexham from guessing what she had foolishly fancied—Hexham, who had come back, and who was standing looking with keen doubtful glances into her face. She turned her two clear inscrutable eyes upon him once more, and tried to meet his gaze quietly, but her eyes fell beneath his.

"Hester," he said once again, and stopped short, hearing a step at the door. Poor Hester blushed up crimson with blushes that she blushed for again. Had she betrayed herself? Ah, no, no! She started up. "I must go," she said. Ah! she would go to her father. There was love, tender and generous love, to shield, to protect, to help her; not love like this, that was but a play, false, cruel, ready to wound.

"Dear Hester, don't go! Stay!" Hexham entreated, as she began to move towards the door leading to her father's studio. He had not chosen his time well, poor fellow, for Lady Jane, who was still in the outer studio, hearing his voice, came to the door, looked in for one instant, and turned away with an odd expression in her face and a brisk shrug of the shoulders. They both saw her. Hester looked up once again, with doubtful, questioning eyes, and then there was a minute's silence.

Hexham understood her: a minute ago he had been gentle, now her doubts angered him.

"Why are you so hard to me?" he burst out at last, a little indignantly, and thoroughly in earnest. "How can you suppose I have ever fancied that odious woman? Will you believe me, or not, when I tell you how truly and devotedly I love and admire you? You are the only woman I have ever seen whom I would make my wife. If you send me away you will crush all that is best and truest in my nature, and destroy my only chance of salvation."

"This is not the way to speak," said Hester, gravely, with a beating heart. His hardness frightened her, as her coldness and self-control angered him; and yet he could not quite forget her sudden emotion of a moment before. It was a curious reluctant attraction that seemed to unite these two people, who loved each other, and yet were cold; and who, like a pair of children as they were, were playing with their best chance of happiness, and wilfully putting it away. They stood looking at each other, doubtful still, excited, at once angry and gentle.

"How can I trust you," said proud Hester, coldly still, "after yesterday?—after—— No, you do not really care for me, or ——"

It was, I think, at that moment that they heard a sort of low stifled scream from outside, and then hasty footsteps. Hester started. "Was that Lady Jane?" she said. "Oh, what is it? Oh, has it come?" Unnerved, excited, she put up her two hands nervously, and instinctively turning to Hexham for help.

"My dearest," said Hexham, melting, utterly forgetting all her coldness, thinking only of her—"what is it—what do you fear?" and as he spoke he kept her back for one instant by the two trembling hands, grasping them firmly in his own. . . .

No other word was spoken, but from that moment they felt that they belonged to each other.

"I don't know what I fear," she said. "Oh, come, come!"

